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BULLETIN OF THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN

NO. 878

ECONOMICS AND POLITICAL SCIENCE SERIES, VOL. 8, NO. 3, PP. 247-426

THE SINGLETAX AND THE LABOR MOVEMENT

BY

PETER ALEXANDER SPEEK

A THESIS SUBMITTED FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN
1915

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CONTENTS

PART ONE

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. HENRY GEORGE AND THE SINGLETAX.....	9
Method	13
Metaphysics	14
Social Philosophy	14
Economic System	15
The Singletax	18
Criticism by Economists.....	20
Criticism by Socialists.....	22
Conclusion	23
II. THE CENTRAL LABOR UNION OF NEW YORK.....	24
Origin	24
Growth and Strength.....	25
Relations to other Organizations.....	28
Boycotting	30
Organizing New Unions.....	31
Eight Hours	31
Political Action. Campaign in 1882.....	32
Labor Day	33
Discussing Politics	33
Conclusion	37
III. OTHER LABOR ORGANIZATIONS.....	40
The Knights of Labor.....	40
The Greenbackers	42
The Socialists.....	46
IV. THE "GRAND LEGAL ROUND-UP" OF STRIKERS AND BOYCOT- TERS	50

PART TWO

V. THE POLITICAL UPRISING OF ORGANIZED LABOR.....	62
Henry George Steps In.....	64
The Singletax Made the Issue.....	66
Characteristics of the Platform.....	69
Chickering Hall Meeting of the Outside Supporters.....	71
The Acceptance of the Nomination.....	71

[249]

VI. THE MAYORALTY CAMPAIGN BY ORGANIZED LABOR IN 1886.....	73
Campaign Funds	73
Campaign Press, <i>The Leader</i>	73
Opposing Parties	76
Democratic Party	76
Republican Party	79
Irving Hall Democrats.....	80
Henry George Clubs and District Associations.....	81
Open Exchange of Letters between Henry George and Abram Hewitt	81
Democratic Meetings and Speeches.....	83
Conflict with the Authorities of the Catholic Church in New York	84
Labor Meetings and Speeches of Henry George.....	86
The Election and Voters.....	87
VII. BUILDING UP THE UNITED LABOR PARTY.....	90
Central Organizations	90
Local Organizations	92
Capture of the Leader by the Socialists.....	98
<i>The Standard</i>	100
The Development of the Conflict with the Authorities of the Catholic Church in New York.....	101
Anti-Poverty Society.....	103
The Conflict over the Term "Labor" in the Party's Name	104
Developments in the Central Organizations	105
VIII. THE OPEN SPLIT IN THE LOCALS.....	109
Developments in the Assembly Districts	109
The Attitude of the Central Labor Union.....	115
The Attitude of the Labor Leaders	116
The Attitude of the Socialist Labor Party.....	117
The Attitude of the <i>Leader</i>	118
The Attitude of Henry George.....	119
Local Organizations in Other Counties.....	119
IX. THE SYRACUSE CONVENTION AND THE STATE CAMPAIGN OF 1887	121
The Convention	121
The Progressive Labor Party.....	131
The State Campaign of 1887.....	138
X. DOWNFALL OF THE UNITED LABOR PARTY.....	143
The Split Among the Singletaxers.....	143
The National Campaign of the United Labor Party.....	149
Henry George in the Presidential Campaign for the Democratic Party	150
The Results of the Campaign.....	154
APPENDICES	158

INTRODUCTION

To Americans it is instructive to have our political and economic movements studied and described for us by foreigners. It is equally instructive to have our radical and revolutionary movements described by one who has taken part in those movements abroad. We get not only an objective judgment on ourselves, but also a view of the way in which American institutions affect a foreign revolutionary.

As a student in the Imperial University of Juriev, a teacher, then an investigator of rural conditions for the Zemstvo of the Government Pskof, then editor and proprietor of a socialistic paper preceding the revolution of 1905, Mr. Speek was forced to leave Russia after the suppression of his paper by the reactionary government that followed. In Denmark he organized a cooperative society among the refugees, and started in New York, in 1909, a newspaper for the people of his own nationality, the Esthonians, which is still existing and developing.

With this background of experience in revolutionary socialism, as well as in practical efforts to help his own people, he sets himself to get an understanding of the most dramatic crisis that has occurred in this country between the two schools of radical labor philosophy, the German socialism of Karl Marx and the American individualism of Henry George. The crisis is affected somewhat by remnants of the American Greenbackism of Edward Kellogg.

In substance Mr. Speek finds that the economic, political and social conditions of Europe produce certain theories and philosophies of reform which the immigrants, with their unaccustomed civic liberties, try to realize in America. But the conditions here are different and they produce, accordingly, different theories and philosophies, such as the singletax and Greenbackism. As a

result, sharp conflicts occur between the European and the American theories.

Yet the mass movements of labor originate and develop, not out of speculative theories or philosophies, but under the force of immediate and practical labor demands. This work shows, by analyzing both the philosophies and the demands, why it was that neither socialism nor the singletax, notwithstanding the fervent efforts of both schools, became the issue of the mass movement of labor in the decade of the eighties.

Yet Mr. Speek holds that, even if philosophies and theories have but little weight for the direct and practical ends of the labor movement, they are nevertheless necessary and immeasurably important for the sake of education. The singletax and socialism stirred up the labor leaders, the reformers, and even the academics.

This great contest of the eighties has not hitherto been studied by our economic or political historians, and Mr. Speek, by centering his attention on the Central Labor Union of New York, picks out the spot where the decisive battle was fought, and thereby fills a gap in the history of American labor. Incidentally, from a theoretical revolutionist he seems to have become a practical reconstructionist.

JOHN R. COMMONS.

PREFACE

The following pages are a piece of research work attempting an historical sketch of the singletax agitation in connection with the labor movement.

The first part contains four chapters: (I) Analysis of the singletax theory; its formation and relation to the economic conditions and to other current doctrines of the time; (II and III) Description of labor organizations in the light of the industrial and legal relations; and (IV) Analysis of the conditions which directly brought organized labor into independent politics in 1886.

The second part contains six chapters, which describe the character and analyze the events and results of the singletax agitation in the labor movement.

In the treatment of the various phases of the subject it has been the author's desire to preserve a strictly neutral point of view, especially in the consideration of conflicts between opposing schools or factions and their leaders.

The research has been conducted under the direction of Professor John R. Commons, while valuable suggestions have been received from Professor Richard T. Ely, of the University of Wisconsin.

PETER ALEXANDER SPEEK.

PART ONE

CHAPTER I

HENRY GEORGE AND THE SINGLETAX

Henry George was born on September 2, 1839, in Philadelphia, Pa. His father was of English-Welsh and his mother of English-Scotch blood, both descendants from middle-class stock, from whom Henry George inherited his restless ambitions and enterprising, individualistic spirit.

His schooling went no further than the first four years of the public schools. When fourteen years of age he went to work in a shop as an errand boy. Dreaming of adventures and fortune, he later made a sea voyage to Australia and India as foremast boy. After his return he started to learn typesetting. The following year rumors of marvelous opportunities for fortune in California lured him westward. In the West he tried prospecting for gold and made repeated investments in mining, but always without success. To earn his living he was compelled to set type and finally to master this trade, which gave him, besides daily bread, an opportunity for mental development already stimulated in earlier days by his fondness for books. Several attempts in the newspaper business were without material success, although they were otherwise fortunate for him. Thinking, reading, gathering materials, writing for his papers, and always occupied in the discussion of public questions, he became an intelligent and powerful journalist.

Although he was for many years a wage-earner he never considered himself as belonging to the wage-earning class, of the existence of which as a feature of our industrial system he seemed unconscious. To be a wage-earner seemed to him, and

perhaps to the majority of the American wage-earners of that time, only a temporary necessity, a stepping stone toward an opportunity to start an independent enterprise which would lead to fortune. In a paper *On the Profitable Employment of Time*, which was one of his earliest literary attempts, he speaks of his "longing for wealth," in his eyes the "principal object of life."¹

His failures in business and speculation were due to obvious causes; he lacked both business ability and capital. His honesty did not allow him to use doubtful methods, and the frontier life in the West, with its free-for-all natural opportunities, was disappearing. The monopolizing power of great business corporations had begun to make itself felt. Mining had so far advanced that it required special knowledge and costly appliances, representing considerable capital. This had led in turn to the appropriation of metal-bearing lands by powerful mining companies, so that few opportunities were left to individual prospectors for "washing out their wages."

The same had happened in newspaper enterprises. In most cases these were at the mercy of the Associated Press and the telegraph companies. The great established papers in combination with the news-gathering agencies seemed able to suppress competition. Henry George had two personal contests with these monopolies and was beaten in both.

His continued failures in getting above the "poverty line" set him thinking deeply about the economic life of society. While in New York in 1869 he was greatly impressed by the sight of its vast wealth side by side with the poverty and degradation of the masses. This observation led him to the pessimistic conclusion that the enormous increase in productive power had had no tendency to lighten the burdens of the toilers.

But what was the cause of such an anomaly? The answer he found mainly in his observations of frontier life in the West, supplemented by reading economic and political literature. He had read John Stuart Mill's *Political Economy* as early as 1868, but his conclusions were due in the main to his own observations and reflections. The transcontinental railway system had been completed in 1869. As a result of this the western cities expected

¹ *The Life of Henry George*, New York, 1904, p. 156.

to achieve rapid development of industries and great increase of population. This expectation provoked inordinate speculation in land. By capitalization of its expected future values, the price rose far above the value measured by the income from the actual use of land. Henry George was greatly impressed by this phenomenon, the consideration of which led him finally to his "great discovery", described by him as follows: "Like a flash it came upon me that *there* was the reason for increasing poverty with advancing wealth. With the growth of population, lands grow in value, and the men who work it must pay more for the privilege."²

Owing to the growth of monopoly and of industrial production on a large scale, the opportunities for wage-earners in mining, farming and manufacturing on a small scale were, in his opinion, greatly lessened. The overland railway brought from the East crowds of settlers seeking fortune. Cheap labor from the Orient continued to pour in. As a result of these conditions wages in the West began to fall. After the opening of the railroad, eastern capital flowed in abundantly, but was invested mainly in acquiring mineral and forest lands and other natural resources, rather than in productive enterprises which might have resulted in a greater demand for labor. This inflow of capital from the East brought down the rate of interest. Henry George ascribed the decline in wages and the fall in the interest rate solely to the rise of land values, and he came to the conclusion that rent rises at the expense of wages and interest. The results of the industrial depression of 1877 in the West tended to confirm this conclusion: rent continued to rise while wages and interest were falling. Thus the singletax theory of Henry George had its inception in his own observations and reflections on the frontier life of the West.

Once the theory was created he applied it to the East, to the whole world, and for all time.

In 1871 Henry George published a booklet entitled *Our Land and Land Policy* in which he first formulated his scheme of reform, viz.: All taxes should be laid exclusively on the value of land irrespective of improvements. As the booklet did not at-

² *Ibid.*, p. 210.

tract any considerable attention and was soon forgotten, Henry George perceived that a more elaborate work was necessary and decided to bring it forth. This work, entitled *Progress and Poverty*, was begun in the latter part of 1877 and finished in 1879. After this book he wrote a series of works, of which *The Science of Political Economy* was the most noteworthy. His *Progress and Poverty* proved to be, in its success in attracting attention, one of the greatest works of modern social reform and political economy. It has been issued in millions of copies in all important languages of the world. This success, unexpected even to the author himself, is to be explained by several causes: the work appeared at a time when social problems and land reforms were widely agitated; the honest and sincere treatment of the subject, the striking criticism of existing economic conditions and relations, the novel, self-assured and bold conclusions, the popular language and the artistic, fascinating style, all made for its success.

Count Tolstoi,³ whose taste as a literary artist cannot be questioned, expressed himself on the style of *Progress and Poverty* as follows: "How I admire his (Henry George's) speech, which is so Christian; his style, which is so clear; and his metaphors, which are so striking."⁴ Karl Marx, reading *Progress and Poverty*, also found that Henry George was a writer of talent.⁵

Progress and Poverty really reads like a poem, especially its introductory chapter and the chapters on the effects of the remedy. In the latter he had unreservedly permitted his rich imagination to soar. "Let Imagination fill out the picture; its colors grow too bright for words to paint."⁶ But, nevertheless, his master hand painted a most beautiful, harmonious and happy society which, according to his sincere expectation, would result from the adoption of the singletax. In writing *Progress and Poverty* he was at the height of his literary powers. This work

³ It is worthy of note that Tolstoi, as a religious Anarchist opposing the state and all kinds of taxes, accepted the indictment of the existing order by Henry George, but instead of the singletax Tolstoi advocated land communalization.

⁴ *The Standard*, Dec. 15, 1888, p. 1.

⁵ *Briefe und Auszüge aus Briefen von Jch. Phil. Becker*, etc. Stuttgart, 1906, p. 177.

⁶ *Progress and Poverty*, 25th Anniversary Edition, New York, p. 469.

overshadows all his other writings, in which he either repeats or explains more fully the ideas set forth in it.

Henry George's public activities consisted mainly in agitation for the singletax. He made several successful speaking tours in England and one in Australia, but the most important of his agitations was carried on by him in his native America. Here he reached his greatest success when he led organized labor in its political campaign in New York City in 1886, defeating the Republican party headed by Theodore Roosevelt, and losing by a small margin to Abram S. Hewitt, the Democratic candidate.

In the middle of 1880 he moved from the West to the city of New York and made his permanent home there, earning his living by writing and speaking, and by his connection with a publishing house. He died in New York on October 29, 1897, in the midst of a municipal campaign in which he was again candidate for mayor, and was celebrated at his death as one of the greatest reformers of the 19th century.

METHOD

Henry George's reasoning was dogmatic and his method deductive. He speaks in the preface to the fourth edition of *Progress and Poverty* as though he had proved his conclusions by induction, but it appears that he simply meant under this term exemplifications or "citing of facts of common knowledge." When his friend Dr. Taylor of San Francisco suggested that he use the inductive method in writing *Protection and Free Trade*, he rejected the suggestion and expressed his preference for deduction, saying: "What the people want is theory, and until they get a correct theory into their heads, all citing of facts is useless."⁷

First theory, consisting mainly of bare statements, then facts to fit the theory—facts not in their causal connections nor as an historical analysis, but facts merely in the sense of illustrations; this was the method employed by the economists of the classical school, especially Ricardo, and this was the method which Henry George used.

⁷ *The Life of Henry George*, New York, 1904, p. 448.

METAPHYSICS

Henry George's general philosophy was based upon a teleological conception that the first or all-beginning cause is Spirit or God—the creator of the world of which the all-embracing system or order is personified as Nature.⁸ Invariable relations of things are the “laws of nature.” Being based on the will of God, they are everywhere and in all times the same—unchangeable and eternal.⁹

Just what Henry George meant by the term “natural laws” he tried to demonstrate by several illustrations from purely physical and biological phenomena—gravitation, magnetism, the appearance of the chick from an egg, the appearance of teeth at a certain period of infancy, and the like.¹⁰ But “human laws are made by man and share all his weakness and frailties. They must be enforced by penalties called sanctions.”¹¹

The real object of science, according to Henry George, is to discover the laws of nature. Likewise the science of political economy seeks in natural law the causes of the phenomena which it investigates. “With human law, except as furnishing illustrations and supplying subjects for its investigations, it (the science of political economy) has nothing whatever to do. It is concerned with the permanent, not with the transient, with the laws of nature, not with the laws of man.”¹²

Thus the metaphysical conceptions of Henry George were those of a teleologist and physicist.

SOCIAL PHILOSOPHY

Henry George's social philosophy was industrial individualism. He advocated free, unrestricted, and unregulated competition and noninterference of the state—*laissez faire* policy. Production, distribution, property rights (except property right to land) and competition were, to him, based upon natural laws, both physical and moral, interference with which was not only

⁸ Henry George, *The Science of Political Economy*, New York, 1898, p. 54.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 59.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 55 and 56.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 60.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 64.

useless and harmful, but even impossible in the long run. Speaking of state interference, he believed it to be "evident that whatever savors of regulation and restriction is in itself bad."¹³ He opposed government as a "directing and repressing power,"¹⁴ and favored a government as an "administration of a great co-operative society . . . in which all the coarse passions are held in check, not by force, not by law, but by common opinion and the mutual desire of pleasing."¹⁵

This shows that the social philosophy of Henry George was tending toward the group of anarchistic philosophies. The chief factors in its formation were American conditions, especially the western frontier at that time, and the influence of the economists of the classical school. Henry George, criticising Socialism, stated that Anarchism was "much better suited than Socialism to the American genius."¹⁶

As Henry George recognized state and laws, though only in a mild and simplified form, and taxes, though only in the sense of a tax on land values, and opposed anarchistic tactics, on the whole he cannot be classified with the anarchists proper, but only as having in his social philosophy tendencies toward Anarchism.

ECONOMIC SYSTEM

Henry George's economic system was, in the main, nearest to that of the radical wing of the Ricardian School. The current political economy explained poverty by the Malthusian doctrine of population and the wages-fund theory, both of which doctrines Henry George rejected; the former on the ground that the larger the population the stronger and more efficient its productive power, the latter for the reason that "wages are not drawn from capital but produced by labor."¹⁷

He himself sought to explain poverty solely by the private appropriation of the economic rent of land, which, according to the Ricardian theory, accepted by Henry George, consisted in a surplus of the better grades of land over the poorest grades in use.

¹³ *Progress and Poverty*, 25th Anniversary Edition, New York, p. 317.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 457.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 563.

¹⁶ *The Standard*, Nov. 19, 1887, p. 1.

¹⁷ *Progress and Poverty*, 25th Anniversary Edition, New York, p. 49.

Economic rent was to him unearned increment, which with the advancement of civilization and the growth of population always rises at the expense of wages and interest, these two latter, being in harmony with each other, fall together as land rents rise or rise together as land rents fall. But as the population is always growing and material production always advancing in a progressive state of society, economic rent, which indicates the ground values of land, has a tendency toward constant rise, and wages and interest have a constant tendency to fall. "Rent swallows up the whole gain and pauperism accompanies progress"¹⁸ was his conclusion in explanation of poverty.

Thus the foundation of his economic system was land, by which he meant "not only the surface of earth, . . . but the whole material universe outside of man himself . . . all natural materials, forces and opportunities."¹⁹

In the explanation of the law of wages he seemed to anticipate the theory that wages are determined by the product of marginal labor.²⁰ According to Henry George, wages are determined by the "lowest point at which production continues . . . and wages will rise or fall as this point rises or falls,"²¹ and "the rate of wages in one occupation is always dependent on the rate in another . . . until the lowest and widest stratum is reached."²² In the demonstration of his reasonings on wages he always goes to the marginal or non-rent land. In the term labor he included all human exertion, physical and mental, and all human powers, natural and acquired.

Interest on capital he justified by the fact that some forms of capital, like plants and animals, have the power to increase by themselves, and that this "average power of increase which attaches to capital from its use in reproductive modes"²³ determines the relation between wages and interest.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 222.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 37.

²⁰ J. B. Clark, *The Distribution of Wealth*, New York, 1908, p. 106.

²¹ *Progress and Poverty*, 25th Anniversary Edition, p. 203.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 210.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 202.

To him capital was only that part of material wealth which was devoted to the aid of production, and he was inclined to treat interest as a kind of wages. The distribution of wealth was to him dual, rather dual than tripartite. "Capital is but a form of labor, and its distinction from labor is in reality but a subdivision, just as division of labor into skilled and unskilled would be."²⁴ The real distribution of wealth was, therefore, between the two possessors of the two factors of production, the land owners (rents) and the producers (wages).

He came to the same conclusions in his treatment of pure profits, one category of which comprises monopoly gains, which, in turn, are due to private ownership of land; another, called wages of superintendence, belongs to the category of wages proper and ought to be considered as such; and the third, due to the elements of risk, was profit obtained by stock jobbing, speculation, and all sorts of gambling.

A monopoly price was to him a tax levied upon the consuming public by private persons. The power to make such private assessment of consumers was due to grants by the government, and to the aggregation of capital in business, the possibility of which he attributed for the most part to "a maladjustment of forces in the legislative department of government."²⁵ Public utility business in which free competition is not possible ought to belong to the functions of the state.²⁶ But he considered all monopolies trivial as compared with monopoly of land²⁷—the real mother of all monopolies, and the cause of industrial depressions, and other socio-economic evils.

This, in outline, is Henry George's economic system, from which he deduced all his reform doctrines.

²⁴ *Progress and Poverty*, 25th Anniversary Edition, p. 203.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 193.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 410.

²⁷ *Ibid.*

THE SINGLETAX

The most important and original contribution of Henry George²⁸ is his plan of reform known as the singletax,²⁹ a summary of which follows:

Everything in the mechanism of the economic life of society is in perfect natural order except one wheel, which is defective—the private appropriation of land rent. Against this Henry George concentrated his furious attacks, because it was to him the root of all the ills in socio-economic life, low wages, low rates of interest, industrial depressions, monopolies—in short, the basic cause of poverty. His main arguments were: (a) land, as such, was created by God and given free to all men, consequently land, being nobody's property (*res nullius*), ought not to be privately appropriated; (b) land in itself has no value, and the value attributed to it, being due to the growth of the community, consequently belongs to the community. The problem of returning the land value to its rightful owner he would solve by confiscation not of the land itself but simply of its economic rents, by means of a tax levied upon the values of land to the full extent of its economic rent, while all other taxes ought to be abolished on the ground that they were an unjust fine or punishment upon the exertions and products of labor. In criticism of existing taxes he went even so far as to state that "customs taxes, and improvement taxes, and income taxes, and taxes on business and

²⁸ Although many writers on economic subjects before Henry George had advocated a singletax, and sometimes a special tax on land values in different degrees and for various reasons, for example, John Locke, *Some Considerations of the Consequences of Lowering the Interests and Raising the Value of Money*, 1691; Marshal de Vauban, *Project d'une dixme royale*, 1707; Jacob Vanderlint, *Money answers all things*, 1734; Turgot, *Réflexions sur la formation et la distribution des richesses*, 1766; Adam Smith, *Wealth of Nations*, 1768 and John Stuart Mill, *Political Economy*, 1848, still none of his predecessors had made the singletax so imperative with such high claims for its consequences. The emphasis given to this theory by Henry George and the methods by which he arrived at his results make his originality unquestionable.

²⁹ The term *singletax* was first used by Henry George in his *Progress and Poverty* (Book VIII, ch. IV) but its general use began in 1887 by the suggestion made by Thomas G. Shearman. George himself was never satisfied with this term, on the ground that it designated rather his method than his philosophy. (*The Life of Henry George*, p. 496.) In this monograph the term *singletax* is, however, used both for the specific plan of reform and for its underlying philosophy.

occupations and on legacies and successions, are morally and economically no better than highway robbery and burglary, all the more disastrous and demoralizing because practiced by the state.'³⁰

He defended the interests of producers—wage-earners, manufacturers, transporters, merchants and bankers. All these were to him in the same harmonious category of labor. If between them there existed some grievances, these were not radical and were primarily due to the unnatural private ownership in land, land speculation and land monopolies. The labor question was to him the land question. No other remedy than the singletax, according to him, would solve the problem of poverty. While greater economy in government would simplify it and put it under more direct control of the people, such reform could not cure existing poverty.³¹ Education would be efficient only when the people were relieved from want.³²

Labor unions could advance wages only temporarily and only at the expense of land rents. So the contest is not between labor and capital, but between laborers and land owners. As the latter are stronger than the former, labor unions cannot make any permanent gains in the struggle. Moreover, the labor unions in their methods are necessarily destructive and tyrannical, destroying individual freedom through organized discipline and wealth through strikes. "These combinations (labor unions) are, therefore, necessarily destructive of the very things which workmen seek to gain through them—wealth and freedom."³²

Nor could cooperation afford relief even if it were universal; "It could not raise wages nor relieve poverty. This is readily seen."³³ Equally futile would be governmental interference, of which the most thorough-going form was to him socialistic. "We have passed out of the socialism of the tribal state and cannot re-enter it again except by retrogression"³⁴ . . . "All that is

³⁰ *A Perplexed Philosopher*, New York, 1904, p. 243.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 301.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 314.

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 318.

necessary to social regeneration is included in the motto of those Russian patriots called Nihilists,³⁵ 'Land and Liberty!' ''³⁶

Only the transfer of land values to the public would solve the problem of poverty; but how? Not by a mere redistribution of land, not by equal partitions of land, not by land communalization, municipalization or nationalization—to all these Henry George objected, because they would require more governmental interference at the expense of individual freedom—but by the singletax, i. e., by gradual transfer of all taxes to the value of land, exclusive of improvements.

The operation of the singletax would, according to him, result in higher wages and profits; in abolition of the concentration of wealth; in checking the withholding of land from use by land-owners and speculators; in encouragement of improvements and industries; in emancipation from industrial depressions; in the solution of the currency problem; in simplification of government and laws; in individual freedom; in development of sciences and arts; in a word, in justice, progress and happiness such as humanity had never yet experienced.³⁷

CRITICISM BY ECONOMISTS

As Henry George made his main deductions from premises and postulates like those of the Physiocrats³⁸ and of the Classical School, all criticisms made by the economists at that time against these two schools were turned also against him. These criticisms were made against his method, his natural rights and natural laws, his individualism and *laissez faire* policy, his labor theory of value, and the absolutism of his conclusions.

At first the economists did not recognize Henry George as an economist at all. Alfred Marshall thought that there was nothing new or true in *Progress and Poverty*, and that Henry George had not understood a single author whom he had undertaken to criticize. Marshall refrained from censuring him, however, as he

³⁵ Russian radical-rationalists in the sixties.

³⁶ *A Perplexed Philosopher*, New York, 1904, p. 319.

³⁷ *Progress and Poverty*, Book IX, ch. I-IV.

³⁸ Benedict Friedlaender (*Die vier Hauptrichtungen der modernen sozialen Bewegung*, Berlin, 1901) calls Henry George a Neophysiocrat, and his specific singletax theory a kind of speculative scheme—"Schematismus".

considered this lack of understanding to be due to lack of special training.³⁹

One of the earliest critics of Henry George among the American economists was Professor Richard T. Ely, who published a series of articles entitled "Land, Labor and Taxation" in the *Independent* in 1887. He pointed out the difficulties of the realization of this theory, its injustice from an ethical standpoint, and that the expected results of such reform were exaggerated by Henry George. This criticism was recognized by the latter as fair, though he disagreed with it.

All criticism by economists Henry George met with counter-criticism; he called economists Scholasticists, saw in many of them a mild kind of Socialists, and attacked their "confusion of terms and ideas."

At a meeting of the American Social Science Association on September 5, 1890, the singletax theory was attacked on different points by several economists; especially by Professor Edwin R. A. Seligman, who believed that the singletax would not lower rent in the cities but would only transfer rent to the government. In answer, Henry George, turning to the professors of political economy, said:

"You men of light and leading . . . if our remedy (the singletax) will not do, what is your remedy? It will not do to propose little goody-goody palliatives, that hurt no one, help no one, and go nowhere . . . You must choose between the singletax or socialism."

He then warned the professors against the danger of the latter, which would bring more interference and more "bars to the liberty of citizens."⁴⁰

At present the importance of Henry George is recognized by economists. The singletax has become more prominent in the discussion of land reform. There is hardly a standard textbook of political economy for college studies in which the singletax theory of Henry George is not treated in one way or another.

J. B. Clark, in the preface of his *Distribution of Wealth*, p. viii, acknowledges his indebtedness to Henry George, L. H. Haney, in his *History of Economic Thought*, p. 516, states that

³⁹ *The Life of Henry George*, New York, 1904, pp. 435 and 436.

⁴⁰ *Journal of Social Science*, October, 1890.

Henry George's *Progress and Poverty* "aroused an interest and provoked such debate that we of a later generation still hear its echoes, while hardly realizing its intensity." Professor William A. Scott, in an article on Henry George, *New World*, March, 1898, pp. 87-102, criticizing the deductive reasoning of Henry George, his extreme pessimism in regard to economic tendencies, and his economic system, admits in his introductory remarks that Henry George was a "strong and inspiring personality and a great power in the civilization of our day."

CRITICISM BY SOCIALISTS

As the materialistic interpretation of history, industrial collectivism, the abolition of the wage-system—that is, a complete transformation of existing economic order and the class struggle tactics—as all these doctrines of the Socialists were diametrically opposed to those of Henry George, the main battle was fought between him and the Socialists, both sides having been, almost to the same extent, self-assured and bold in their reasonings and conclusions. In this conflict the sharpest clash occurred on the question of the relation between labor and capital. The Socialists claimed that the economic interests of the wage-earners and those of the capitalists were antagonistic. This claim was denied by Henry George, who held that such conflict of interests exists only between land owners and producers, including in the latter term both laborers and capitalists.

Karl Marx, criticising *Progress and Poverty*, found Henry George theoretically entirely behind the times—"total arrièrè",⁴¹—ignorant of the nature of "surplus value", and belonging to a class of those "bourgeois economists" who would allow the wage-system and capitalist production to remain, under the delusion that, if the ground rents through taxes should be taken into the treasury of the state, all the faults of capitalistic production would disappear.⁴²

Friedrich Engels criticized Henry George in the same way, pointing out that "what the Socialists demand implies a total

⁴¹ *Briefe und Auszüge aus Briefen* von Joh. Phil. Becker, etc. Stuttgart, 1906, pp. 176, 177.

⁴² *Ibid.*

revolution of the whole system of social production; what Henry George demands leaves the present mode of social production untouched."⁴³

Henry George attacked socialism along all lines for not having a religious basis, for confusion of land with capital, for not understanding the term labor, for revolutionary tactics, for arraying class against class, for the destruction of individual freedom—making the people the slaves of the state, and so forth. As he was opposed to anything which savored of interference (except the confiscation of the economic rent of land) he saw socialism in such movements as charity,⁴⁴ prohibition, protection⁴⁵ and the like.

CONCLUSION

From an objective standpoint hardly anything can be said either for or against Henry George's metaphysical views, because they were a matter of his ultimate belief or religion. His doctrine of industrial individualism as a basic point in his social philosophy is suffering under the recent tendencies of our industrial life. The interference of public authority—governmental control and regulation—is developing both extensively and intensively. The differentiation of industrial classes and groups, all of which he included in the same category of harmonious producers or laborers, has become an obvious and generally recognized fact in our time.

It is, however, somewhat early to draw a final conclusion concerning his specific scheme of reform,—the singletax. Although there is no one spot on earth where the singletax is realized to the extent proposed by its author and which would justify the term singletax, still the theory itself is gaining in popularity as an ingenious plan to encourage the improvement of land and to check the withholding of land from use. There is a marked tendency, especially in the cities, to tax unimproved land higher than improved.

⁴³ Friedrich Engels, *The Condition of the Working Classes in England*, 1884, *Preface*.

⁴⁴ *The Life of Henry George*, p. 568.

⁴⁵ *The Standard*, Jan. 14, 1888, p. 5.

CHAPTER II

THE CENTRAL LABOR UNION OF NEW YORK

ORIGIN

On December 15, 1881, a number of workingmen met in Science Hall, New York, in response to a call issued by Robert Blissert, a journeyman tailor and a member of the Excelsior Labor Club, a Socialist local assembly of the Knights of Labor, and resolved to call a mass meeting of the workingmen of New York, at the Cooper Institute, on January 30, 1882, for the purpose of sending greetings and encouragement to the tenants and workingmen of Ireland in their struggle against the English feudal landlordism.¹

On the appointed date one trade union after another "marched up to the hall, most of them preceded by a band. The result was a stirring manifesto addressed to the workingmen of all countries,"¹ to encourage the suffering and struggling Irish people. The manifesto was signed by Matthew Maguire, a Socialist.

At the same meeting Charles L. Miller proposed a resolution that all delegates of trade and labor unions then present, report to their respective organizations and lay before them the question whether they were in favor of forming a United Labor Organization. This resolution was adopted and the date for the next meeting fixed, February 11, 1882.¹

On this date, at the same meeting place, fourteen unions reported through their delegates that they favored a permanent United Organization of Labor Unions. After an address delivered by Philip Van Patten, national secretary of the Socialist Labor party, the formation of the Central Labor Union was unanimously agreed upon.

¹ *John Swinton's Paper*, Feb. 28, 1886, p. 1.

The platform was drawn up in a strongly socialistic spirit, tinged somewhat by the ideas of the Greenback currency reformers. The preamble set forth the need for "concentrating the working classes for their own natural protection, education, and social advancement."² The Declaration of Principles emphasized the inevitableness of the class struggle between capital and labor. It reiterated the maxim of the old International: "The emancipation of the working classes must be achieved by the working classes themselves."² It was also explicit in regard to the necessity of political action. The Declaration was followed by a list of legislative demands dealing with the protection of labor.

A much broader task of the new organization was outlined in its "Object." This included aid to the constituent trade and labor organizations in extending their membership as well as in organizing new unions, in the dispensation of strike benefits, in the arbitration of disputes with employers, and in the support of the labor press. There was finally a provision for the collecting of labor statistics—a need which, in the absence of both state and federal bureaus, the workingmen felt keenly.

The principles expressed in this platform remained unchanged until the end of the eighties, while the methods of organization were gradually improved as we shall see presently.

GROWTH AND STRENGTH

The structure of the Central Labor Union from its beginning until 1885 was simple. It had no president. A chairman was elected at each meeting. This was done in order "that no man should have the power as president to sell out the union to any political party."³ The central body consisted of five delegates from each *bona fide* trade and labor union, but no trade could be doubly represented, that is, through both its central body and its local branch. As a further precaution against politicians it was provided that no person could be a delegate who had not been a

² *The Constitution of the Central Labor Union of New York*, edition of 1887, New York.

³ *Testimony of P. I. McGuire* before the Senate Committee, Aug. 29, 1883. Report of the Committee of the Senate upon the relations between Labor and Capital, 1885, p. 809.

member of his respective trade organization for at least six months previous to his election. No public official, professional politician, lawyer, or anyone who was not a wage-earner, was eligible as a delegate.⁴ By the middle of 1884 the number of affiliated unions had grown to 36.⁵ In July, 1886, it embraced 120 unions.⁶

P. I. McGuire testified August 29, 1883, that the Central Labor Union of New York had a membership of 70,000 in the three cities of New York, Brooklyn, and Jersey City. This included organizations of men who were without trades, unskilled laborers as well as clerks and workmen in occupations where there were not enough men to form a regular union. These organizations were called amalgamated labor associations.⁷

Early in 1886 the membership of the Central Labor Union had grown so large and had so much additional business, in the form of committees, reports, communications, debates, resolutions, voting and so forth, that Sunday afternoon meetings could no longer cope with it efficiently and rapidly. Thus the Central Labor Union was confronted by the necessity for reorganization. The Committee on Constitution worked out a plan which was adopted by an almost unanimous vote of the delegates present. This plan was submitted for endorsement to the unions represented before it became a law.

It provided for trade sections where four or more unions belonged to the same trade, and for a miscellaneous section to include the remaining organizations. Many of the functions which had hitherto been exercised by the Central Labor Union, such as arbitration of disputes with employers, the giving of strike aid, and the instituting of boycotts were entrusted to one or another of these sections as a first resort. To the jurisdiction of the Central Labor Union were left functions requiring the concerted action of all the bodies affiliated therewith.⁸

At the appointed meeting in July, 1886, for the receiving of

⁴ *Section 3 of the Constitution.*

⁵ *John Swinton's Paper*, July 13, 1884, p. 2.

⁶ *John Swinton's Paper*, July 4, 1886, p. 4.

⁷ *Report of the Committee of the Senate upon the Relations between Labor and Capital*, 1885, pp. 808 and 809.

⁸ *John Swinton's Paper*, Feb. 28, 1886, p. 1.

referendum votes on a new constitution, 92 unions reported in favor, 4 against, and 14 protested because the delegates had not been instructed, while the delegates of a number of unions were absent. The chairman ruled that the new Constitution thus went into effect. An appeal against the ruling of the chair was voted down. The secretary was instructed to assort the trades and place them in their proper sections. At the next meeting the reorganization was completed and the grouping of the unions was ratified.

The names and numbers of the various trades sections were as follows:

No. 1.	Building Trades.....	39 unions
2.	Tobacco "	9 "
3.	Textile "	8 "
4.	Clothing "	16 "
5.	Printing "	13 "
6.	Food Products, etc.....	16 "
7.	Clerks, etc.	6 "
8.	Iron and Metal	18 "
9.	Furniture Trade	14 "
10.	Miscellaneous	68 "

Altogether there were ten sections and 207 unions in the city of New York and its vicinity. Each union had the right to send five delegates to its Trades Section Council and one to the Central Labor Union. In September, 1886, the number of unions affiliated had fallen to 142. Still the total membership was large, representing, according to a report in *The Sun*, over 40,000 voters.⁹

The exact membership is exceedingly hard to establish, because the number of the union members was constantly fluctuating. George Block, secretary of the Executive Committee in 1886, testified November 2, 1887, before Mr. Stetson, a referee, that "there were about 60,000 men in the labor unions that ran Mr. George for Mayor" in 1886.¹⁰ This number evidently includes members of unions which were not under the direct control of the Central Labor Union. Adding to the 40,000 voters estimated by *The Sun* the members who were not naturalized citizens but who never-

⁹ *The Sun*, September 19, 1886, p. 3.

¹⁰ *The Leader*, Nov. 3, 1887, p. 1.

theless took part in the economic struggle, it is perhaps safe to say that the membership of the unions affiliated with the Central Labor Union was, in the fall of 1886, about 50,000,—quite an imposing army of organized labor in the industrial center of New York at that time.

In July, 1886, the Central Labor Union decided to form a National Central Labor Union. A committee was appointed to correspond with all the Central Labor Unions which, following the example of the Central Labor Union in New York, had been organized during previous years in the great industrial centers of the East,—Brooklyn, Philadelphia, Cleveland, Baltimore, Buffalo, Boston and other cities. They were all similar to the Central Labor Union of New York. But this plan to unite them into a National Central Labor Union was abandoned because the attention of the leading Central Labor Union of New York was soon totally absorbed by the political campaign.

The delegates met every Sunday afternoon, and the meetings usually continued three or four hours. If, after the regular business, there was any time left, it was used for debates upon general subjects which very often became political discussions. The Central Labor Union was very often called the "Parliament of Organized Labor" by the newspaper reporters, and afterwards, at the end of 1885, when the Union had grown much larger, its meetings were called the "Sessions of the Central Labor Congress."¹¹

RELATIONS TO OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

The relations of the Central Labor Union to the non-labor organizations, economic or political, were those of complete aloofness. This can be seen not only in the "Objects of the Central Labor Union", but in all its practical steps and actions. But its relations to the labor organizations were characterized by friendly cooperation. Labor, its defense, and the struggle for the betterment of its conditions,—these were the main issues. The Central Labor Union tolerated all social philosophies and discussed them, but as a body it gave no preference to one over an-

¹¹ *John Swinton's Paper*, Oct. 18, 1885, p. 4, col. 1.

other. The same tolerant relations existed toward the Greenbackers, and toward all organizations which advocated, with their specific philosophies, practical labor demands.

There occurred, quite often, conflicts between unions themselves, especially in the same trade. The Central Labor Union tried by all possible means to settle such conflicts. When a trade was represented by two distinct and antagonistic organizations, and a difficulty existed between them and their employers, the Central Labor Union refused to assist either of them unless they harmonized their differences. For the purpose of settling such difficulties the Union organized a Committee on Grievances, which examined and investigated all complaints and grievances among the unions represented. Such committee presented the results of investigation to the central body or prospective section, which then endeavored to settle the conflict. The difficulty of harmonizing the interests of separate unions, speaking different languages and with different methods of thought, was evidenced in many cases.

In case of labor disputes between employers and employees the delegates reported the matter to the Section Committee on Arbitration, and if arbitration failed it was submitted to the Central Labor Union, which had the power to sanction a strike. When a strike took place, the Union called on all trade and labor organizations represented to assist the one in difficulty.

The first important assistance by the Central Labor Union in the case of a strike was the raising of money for the support of the freight handlers, when they were on their celebrated general strike, in 1882, against the railroads centering in New York. The delegates were enthusiastic in their work, and the occasion gave opportunities to test their energy. Lectures were arranged for, and Benjamin Butler, Robert Ingersoll and Felix Adler addressed large meetings. Harry Miner and others gave the use of their theaters and halls. By the efforts of the Central Labor Union \$60,000 was raised for the strikers, but the great strike nevertheless was unsuccessful.

Besides this support, many thousands of dollars were contributed by the Central Labor Union for local trades in trouble, as well as for others outside the city of New York and its vicinity. Over \$5,000 was collected and forwarded through the Central

Labor Union to Hocking Valley during the miners' troubles in 1884 and 1885, and about \$3,000 was subscribed for the silk weavers who were on a strike against their employer, John N. Stearn. The shirt makers, ironers, and a score of other trades were materially assisted in their struggles by the Central Labor Union.

BOYCOTTING

The boycott as a means of coercion in labor struggles against employers was popularized by the Central Labor Union, and was adopted by other local and central labor bodies. If a strike failed or continued so long that it became unbearable for the strikers, then the latter usually appealed to the Central Labor Union, which, together with the strikers, decided to declare a boycott upon the affected employer. To this end the Central Labor Union advertised the boycott as widely as possible and spent for such advertisement considerable sums of money. When the employer expressed willingness to resume negotiations, the Central Labor Union usually took the lead.

The first boycott indorsed by the Central Labor Union was against Hastings and Company, of Philadelphia, gold beaters, because this company discharged members of the workingmen's union. This was in April, 1882. The boycott as a weapon of retaliation, however, was not generally adopted until *Typographical Union No. 6*, in January, 1884, instituted wholesale boycotting proceedings against the *Tribune*. After that, boycotting was very successful, especially in the city of New York.

In February, 1886, the Central Labor Union had on its books resolutions indorsing the boycott of the Brooklyn Watch-Cane Company, Brennan & White's Shoes, Abendroth & Root's Moldings, Adam Brodt's Hats, Fuller & Warren's Stoves, the Fifth Avenue Hotel, People's Line of steamboats to Albany, and Stephen Rogers, the employer of cheap painters, as well as the New York Lumber and Wood-Working Company. The boycott of these concerns was undertaken for discharging union men. At a meeting on February 21, 1886, the Central Labor Union resolved to boycott a silk manufacturer of Holyoke, Mass., on account of his alleged inhuman conduct toward his employes. Only a few cases of boycott conducted by the Central Labor Union are

here quoted in order to show the strength of the latter and the nature and purpose of boycotting. The actual number of cases was much larger. One may find in the labor newspapers of that time a large number of advertisements of boycotts published by the Central Labor Union.

As mentioned above, the popularization, in the early eighties, of the boycott against employers in America was mainly due to the Central Labor Union of New York. Before that time the boycott was occasionally practiced in the West and the Middle West, but not under the name of boycott. The Central Labor Union had even created a special Boycott Committee which conducted, in conjunction with the affected unions, all authorized boycotts.

ORGANIZING NEW UNIONS

The Constitution, article VIII, section 4, provided that:

"The Committee on Organization shall encourage and assist the formation of new unions, and visit, or cause to be visited, the various unions herein represented whenever required."

In this work the Central Labor Union was quite an important instrument. About thirteen trades were organized under the guidance and with the support of the Union from its beginning until July, 1884, which "have now strong organizations, while all have been greatly strengthened. The Central Labor Union was instrumental in organizing the Executive Council of the Building Trades and still watches over it."¹² The Central Labor Union was mainly instrumental also in organizing the brewery workmen, and at the end of 1885 there was not a brewery in the city of New York which was not more or less well organized. Through affiliation with the Central Labor Union, the German and English bakers were organized and their hours of labor were reduced.

EIGHT HOURS

In the middle of the eighties, the eight hour movement again sprang into prominence, growing directly out of the unemployment due to the depressed industrial conditions. Mainly as a

¹² *John Swinton's Paper*, May 2, 1886, p. 2.

result of the endeavors of the Central Labor Union and of other labor organizations, an Eight Hour Bill was brought before the legislature of the state of New York, and to support this bill the Central Labor Union organized and conducted a large street demonstration (Eight Hour Parade) on April 14, 1884.

Two years later, in 1886, when the Federation of Organized Trades and Labor Unions started a nation-wide eight hour campaign, the Central Labor Union called an Eight Hour Meeting on April 12, where a resolution called the Eight Hour Platform was unanimously passed. The eight hour day was said to be necessary because by that means

"a large number of unemployed workmen, who were made superfluous by all machinery being in the hands of private individuals, will again find employment, and all other workers will be enabled to take more rest, to educate themselves, and gain the necessary strength and enlightenment for the great struggle to come."¹³

The strikes and boycotts undertaken for the shortening of the hours of labor were supported and vigorously prosecuted by the Central Labor Union. In several cases—for example, in cigar making, cabinet making, and other trades—they succeeded in shortening the hours of labor. On the whole, however, the movement ended in failure, due in part to the riots in Haymarket Square, Chicago. This failure in the economic field was one of the causes which drove the Central Labor Union into the political campaign in the fall of 1886.

POLITICAL ACTION—CAMPAIGN IN 1882

In the second half of 1882 the effects of industrial depression were again felt by the workingmen; also, the rigid enforcement of the conspiracy laws aided in making trade union action more or less unsuccessful. Several long strikes, among them the freight-handlers', ended in failure.

The comparative prosperity which followed the great depression of 1873–1878 had given the workingmen an opportunity somewhat to reestablish their economic organizations and to make a successful effort to better their conditions. The majority of

¹³ *Ibid.*

strikes at that time were won by the workers. Thereupon the employers turned to the legislatures and to the courts for protection against the labor organizations. This change of front by the employers led the organized workingmen to political action in 1882, but there were fewer than 10,000 votes cast for their candidates in the election in November of that year, a showing which was poor indeed.

LABOR DAY

In 1882 the Central Labor Union at a "non-rent" mass meeting¹⁴ introduced the idea of the now universal Labor Day. The first Monday in September was fixed upon for an annual holiday for the workers, and P. J. McGuire, afterwards general secretary of the Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners, was the father of the motion. Shortly after that the Federation of Trades and Labor Unions of the United States and the Knights of Labor, together with various other trades assemblies and central labor unions, indorsed the plan of their labor holiday, and the Cigar-makers' International Union incorporated it in its constitution. The reason given for adopting the labor holiday, apart from any national day, was that labor alone, as a distinct class, had no day which it could call its own. This is the beginning of the Labor Day which was afterwards legalized¹⁵ and which is a permanent monument to the Central Labor Union of New York.

DISCUSSING POLITICS

When the Central Labor Union in its early days, 1882-1883, was yet small, and business matters did not demand the entire time of the Sunday meetings, these were generally ended by lively discussions of theoretical questions: the land problem, greenbackism, socialism, anarchism, in short, all sorts of panaceas for the existing social evils. Afterwards, when a considerable number of unions had come in and business had grown larger, no time was left for such discussion, except on rare occasions.

But besides the practical problems connected with the eco-

¹⁴ *The Public*, Nov. 3, 1911, p. 1127.

¹⁵ The legalization of Labor Day by the government was mainly due to the agitation and endeavors of the Order of Knights of Labor.

conomic struggles of the day, there was one peculiar problem—peculiar in the sense that the Central Labor Union could not get rid of it—which caused frequent and lively discussion, and this was the subject of independent political action. It is true that after the unsuccessful campaign of 1882, the opponents of independent political action got the upper hand, and for a time this subject was dropped. But thereafter the constant conflicts of the striking unions with the police, the courts, and the “bad laws” brought up this tabooed subject frequently at the meetings of the Central Labor Union, and it usually caused very lively and exciting discussions.

A special meeting Saturday night, January 24, 1885, was held for the discussion of one phase of the political question: Shall the vote of Trade Unionists be retained as the balance of power? The discussion was opened by a delegate from the Cigarmakers' Progressive Union, who said that his organization was opposed to anything but independent political action. He pointed out that the steel and iron workers of Pennsylvania had held the balance but had not been able to remove the Conspiracy Law from the statute books of the state. The Cigarmakers' International Union for ten years past had advocated holding the balance of power, but although the tenement house cigar bill was passed, it was later declared unconstitutional. It would be so in every case, he asserted, until the toilers had their own men in the legislature and could make their power felt. “Do you think”, he asked, “if the workingmen had shown their power, that the Court of Appeals would have declared that law unconstitutional?”

The next speaker represented the Tinsmiths' Union, which he said was opposed to going into political action of any kind; the members had voted against it, because the workingmen were not yet ready. As to the question of the balance of power, only the leaders advocated that, and for their own selfish purposes.

A delegate from Typographical Union No. 6 was in favor of the unions holding the balance of power. He had not read of the reform movement that had not been accomplished by its advocates holding the balance. The industrial question would never be solved through the efforts of the workingmen alone. He believed that the way to bring about the desired reform was to cap-

ture the existing machinery of one of the old parties, and it was only a waste of time to try to construct a new machine. If workmen in New York would only realize that they held the majority of votes, they could get any legislation they wanted. He argued against the policy of excluding politics from trade unions, saying that such was a device of the enemy and that unionists tied their hands when they did so.

"Politics," said a delegate of the Excelsior Labor Club, "is a business, and that of the most dishonest kind. Whichever of the two present parties gains, the loss will be always with the workmen and the gain on the other side." At that time, he stated, the workingmen could not be united.

The politics of America, said a delegate, could not be compared with those of any other country. The condition of labor and capital was the same in European countries as here, but not that of politics. Nowhere else was there such a political system as the American, which was that of wage slavery introduced into politics and which could be overthrown only by independent political action by the workingmen. The workers will go into strikes, go through fire and water, bare their breasts to the bullets of the military, and then turn round and vote for the power that oppresses them. It was so in Pennsylvania in 1877; it was so in Hocking Valley in 1884. The idea of workingmen holding the balance of power in elections was absurd. They might do it, and it would be all right, if they were diplomats; but if they had been diplomats they would not need it today. If introduced into trade unions the idea would cause more disruption and dissension than independent politics.

One of the delegates of the Cigarmakers' Progressive Union said that although his union voted in favor of independent political action, those who were citizens could not be trusted to abide by that decision. It was the active members who favored independent politics; the inactive did not care.¹⁶

At the next special meeting called for the discussion of independent political action, January 31, 1885, the question was put before the unions by asking them if they were in favor of the Central Labor Union going into dependent political action, or in

¹⁶ *John Swinton's Paper*, Feb. 1, 1885, p. 4.

favor of the Union advocating the workingmen holding the balance of power in elections.

These questions caused much debate and excitement in the labor unions. The diversity of opinion did not allow any definite conclusion. While the radical element, led by the Socialists, favored independent political action, the more moderate element opposed it on the ground that "There is plenty of work for organized labor to do in agitation, organization, and education; there is boycotting to be done, arbitrating and strikes to be managed and grievances to be adjusted."¹⁷

The general opinion prevailed that the Central Labor Union must be an industrial organization.

"Its policy must continue to be to attract all shades of creeds, colors, and conditions of workers—not to repel those whose political ideas are not in conformity with many of those already in the Union. In its meetings the Socialist and Democrat, Greenbacker and Republican, must have an equal footing, or the Union will collapse, as others have in the past."¹⁸

Would the Central Labor Union in the future go into independent politics? This question remained open; for the present the general opinion was against politics, especially against affiliation with any of the existing political parties. But the question of politics at the meetings of the Central Labor Union came up again and again.

The punishment and imprisonment of striking and boycotting workers became even more frequent than before, as was shown, for instance, in a picketing case in which a unionist cigarmaker had assaulted a blackleg and had been sentenced to imprisonment for two months. A fellow unionist of the assailant, who had had no part in the affair, appeared in court as a witness for him. He was at once arrested, and under the furious language of District Attorney Purdy and the order of Judge Cowing, was sentenced to three months' imprisonment on Blackwell's Island. In conducting the case both District Attorney Purdy and Judge Cowing used denunciatory language in regard to trade unions.¹⁹ The

¹⁷ *John Swinton's Paper*, Nov. 1. 1885, p. 4.

¹⁸ The affiliation of the Central Labor Union as a body with any non-labor political party (Democratic, Republican, or other) was prohibited by the Constitution.

case was taken up by the Central Labor Union to induce the governor to pardon the witness so sentenced.

In addition to these conflicts with the governmental authorities, the question of politics was kept alive in the usual way by the old party politicians, who tried to catch the votes of organized labor by pointing to what they had already done for labor and by promising to do yet more in the future. As a reward for achievements and promises they endeavored to get the indorsement of the labor organizations. This persistent besieging by the politicians was a cause of incessant debate on politics at the meetings of the Central Labor Union, though indorsement of the politicians was in every case refused.

CONCLUSION

Summing up this short review of the history of the Central Labor Union from its beginning to the middle of 1886, we must conclude that it was a great factor in the labor movement in the Eastern section of the country at that time. It bore all the characteristics of an independent class movement of wage earners. Its leaders and members were exclusively workingmen. Their demands were practical labor demands, chiefly in the economic field. When defeat after defeat followed in the economic struggle, they went into independent politics, and if they failed there they temporarily turned to economic and educational work till more favorable times arrived.

Another characteristic of the Central Labor Union, in comparison with other typical labor unions, was its radicalism, which is not explained alone by the depressed economic conditions and legal prosecutions of labor at that time, but by the peculiarities of the constituents of the Central Labor Union itself, and by current social philosophies. A large number of its members were immigrants, mostly Irish, Germans, and Bohemians.

The Irish immigrants were at that time, when the Home Rule agitation was at its height, strongly under the influence of the radical and energetic political refugees who were their leaders. Moreover, the foundation of the Central Labor Union had some connections with the Irish movement in Ireland, as before men-

¹⁹ *John Swinton's Paper*, May 17, 1885, p. 4.

tioned, and the Union was always ready to give its moral support to the suffering Irish people. The "Pay-No-Rent" movement in Ireland was very popular among the Irish immigrants in America. They considered the land question as a reform absolutely necessary to the amelioration of the lot of the laboring people.

The German immigrants also were represented by the radical elements. Socialism was making progress in Germany at that time, and the immigrants from there, at least a majority of them, spread abroad socialistic views. The same was true of the immigrants from Austria,—the Germans and Bohemians. Then came the French and other immigrants from southern Europe—also radical in a measure. Add to these the Scandinavians, the immigrants from Russia (mostly radical Jews), and finally the American-born workers, and we have a multi-colored picture of the constituents of the Central Labor Union.

Partly in this diversity of the members of the Central Labor Union is found the explanation of a third peculiarity. The Central Labor Union had not and could not have any definite tactics, nor a theoretical viewpoint of its existence and purpose. It tried economic methods, then politics, then education, then again politics. In its struggle it used every possible means which it considered at this or that time proper. It was experimenting. The theoretical views of the members also were confused and contradicted each other to a great extent. As a body the Union had either to accept all the theories of members, without asking whether they contradicted each other, or whether they were right or wrong, or to refuse to accept any theory. It usually refused to hold any definite theory, but when, as in the case of entering independent politics, such action became necessary, it embodied all current theories, though contradictory with one another, in its political platform—unionism and socialism, singletax and greenbackism, as in the political platform of the campaign of 1886.

Though the Central Labor Union lacked definite tactics and consistent theory, the beginning of modern trade unionism can nevertheless be traced back to the Central Labor Union as well as to other labor organizations of that time. The Central Labor Union emphasized the economic side of the labor movement and

the necessity of having better labor laws; it advocated arbitration in trade disputes, and represented a form of constitutional government hitherto not very successful among laborers; finally, its leaders and agitators developed very definite and modern views on trade unionism. In one of the reports of the secretary of the Central Labor Union the following idea is expressed:

"What we need is to elevate the labor movement above the plane on which it is treading to a level with capitalism. We have knocked too long at the back doors, taken off our hats too humbly, and bowed our salaams too lowly. We must stand more erect; and to enable us to do this, we must respect ourselves and force recognition from the employers."²⁰

To elevate labor to the level of capital is the corner stone of the theory of modern trade unionism.

²⁰ *John Swinton's Paper*, Oct. 25, 1885, p. 4.

CHAPTER III

OTHER LABOR ORGANIZATIONS

THE KNIGHTS OF LABOR

The most important labor organization in New York in the middle eighties, after the Central Labor Union, was the Order of the Knights of Labor, organized by Uriah S. Stephens in Philadelphia on December 13, 1869, as a secret labor organization to promote industrial cooperation. Its growth was slow at first, but in 1878, when the veil of secrecy was thrown off, its membership began rapidly to increase. The year 1878 was also the date of national organization. During the early eighties the Knights increased in number to 50,000, but owing to the indefiniteness of the aim of the Order its membership fluctuated widely. The Order was organized in assemblies, trade or mixed, which in their turn were territorially united in district assemblies, so that the last-named in any one locality embraced all of the organized trades. The district assemblies formed the General Assembly of the Knights of Labor, which elected a Grand Master Workman and a General Executive Board. The government of the Order was centralized, the General Assembly having supreme and absolute authority over the district and local assemblies.

The growth of the order was stimulated by the industrial depression which set in during 1883. The Order took up strikes and boycotts and also extended its activities toward industrial cooperation. The great gain in membership came primarily from the unskilled workers in the principal cities which at that time were largely of native American or North-European stock, especially Irish. The total membership in the country was about 125,000 in 1885, but in 1886 it rose to nearly 700,000.¹ New

¹ *Record of Proceedings of the General Assembly of the Knights of Labor of America*, Richmond, Va., 1886, p. 328.

York contributed a large share of this increase. On July 1, 1886, there were in the city of New York and its vicinity assemblies of the Order as follows:²

District Assembly	Number of Members	Number of Local Assemblies	Trade
No. 45.....	132	13	Telegraphers
No. 49.....	60,809	366	Mixed
No. 64.....	1,938	11	Printers
No. 85.....	1,704	9	Plumbers
No. 91.....	3,329	16	Shoemakers
District Assemblies 5...	67,912	415	

The largest and most prominent among the organizations was District Assembly 49. It played a leading part in the life of the Order. Many local assemblies in the city of New York, under different names, were represented in the Central Labor Union. Nearly one-half of the delegates of the Union were Knights of Labor and their sympathizers.

The advocacy by the Order of industrial cooperation, and the attempt to put it into practice as a substitute for the wage-system, remind us of the main lines of the modern French syndicalism. The difference between them is not so much in philosophy as in tactics. Syndicalism is aggressive, revolutionary, while the tactics of the Order were defensive, reserved, and to a certain extent conservative.

The relation of the Order to politics was neutral, although it contained an influential faction which favored independent political action. This faction was composed of Greenbackers and Socialists. With the former the Order as a whole maintained friendly relations, since it officially endorsed, in its preamble, their demand for currency reform. But the relations between the Order and the Socialists were somewhat strained, notwithstanding the nearly socialistic preamble of the Order. The founders and early leaders of the Order held more radical views upon the social

² *Ibid.*, pp. 326-328.

question than did the later members, and at the beginning of the eighties several prominent Socialists, Philip Van Patten and others, joined the Order, and the Socialist papers sympathized with its objects. The members of a local assembly in New York bearing the name of the Excelsior Club were almost all Socialists. Besides this, several Socialist local unions, among them the Progressive Cigarmakers', belonged to the Order. The Socialists tried to acquire a predominating influence but failed. Hence the relations between them and the Order became to a certain extent strained, especially after the election of T. V. Powderly to the position of general master workman of the Order. The Socialists accused the Order and its head, Mr. Powderly, of conservatism, saying that they had turned to a "middle class" philosophy and had made the principles of the Order a "dead letter". Besides this, the Socialists did not favor the secrecy, the ceremonies, rituals, and religious sentiment in the Order.

THE GREENBACKERS

The Greenback movement got its somewhat awkward name from the legal-tender notes issued in 1862 by the Federal Government to the amount of \$450,000,000, mainly for the payment of the Civil War expenses. The backs of these notes were printed in green.

Previous to the Civil War the farming localities in the western agricultural states and territories were in poor condition; they lacked markets for their products; the means of transportation and communication were not yet developed. But during the war the government became a heavy customer of easy access for the farmers over all the country. The prices of products went up, and the farmers were paid by the government in greenbacks. Thus they got money, and the mortgages on farms, originally due in gold, were paid in greenbacks at from 50 to 60 per cent discount. In the middle of the sixties agriculture enjoyed a considerable prosperity, which was explained in part by the better currency system founded upon the issue of greenbacks. These notes became very important and were advocated by men of all parties—especially by farmers in the agricultural states—as a remedy for economic and other social evils in the country at that time.

Such sentiment in favor of greenbacks was supported by the feeling that the eastern bankers who held most of the government bonds had made a hard bargain with the government in the time of war; they paid for the bonds in greenbacks worth from 38 to 75 cents on the dollar, and they would have been paid in return in greenbacks, at nearly the same discount, had they not influenced Congress to pay them "in coin"³ even when such payment was not required on the face of the bond.⁴ As it was, they would get more than their due. Again, the value of silver began to decrease in comparison with the value of gold, and the big financiers were supposed to have influenced the Congress in 1873⁵ to demonetize silver. In this way the feeling that the capitalists had formed a secret plot against the people's money—greenbacks and silver dollars—was aroused.

Thus the Greenback movement originated in the financial legislation and struggle growing out of the conditions of the Civil War. But currency reform was only the manifestation of the movement. Behind it were the deeper economic needs of the masses—farmers, wage-earners, and small manufacturers. It was the beginning of private industrial control over markets, credit, and transportation facilities by middlemen and bankers united into large capitalistic combinations, and the Greenback movement was a revolt against these controlling combinations. The masses lacked credit at a low rate of interest. Transport facilities were controlled by a few on the basis of the preference rates, so that the small producers were driven out. They could not reach the market directly, but were dependent upon the middleman, who got the biggest profit from the rising of prices.

There was no so-called class-conscious movement in the modern sense. The farmers, wage-earners, and small manufacturers joined forces, as *producers*. The movement was started by the wage-earners, together with the small manufacturers, and was afterwards joined and led by the farmers. They all had the same philosophy, based upon the interests of small owners. While the farmer represented in his person the laborer and the small producer, the wage-earner was desirous of becoming also an inde-

³ *The Act* of March 18, 1869.

⁴ The payment of some bonds was required "in money", some "in gold."

⁵ The law which stopped the free coinage of silver.

pendent small producer. He was interested in high prices, which meant abundance of employment at increased wages, and this in turn meant a possibility of saving and afterwards of independent small enterprise. To get rid of the middleman through productive cooperation was the aim of the movement at its beginning. This cooperation was to be not of laborers, but of small producers.

But most of the attempts in productive cooperation failed because of the lack of credit and market, and if some rare cooperative enterprise succeeded, its members became big capitalists—employers like others against whom the movement was being carried on. When prices began to fall, the leaders of the movement turned their attention to the government, from which they tried to get help in the form of “cheap money”. Thus the cooperative movement was transformed into the Greenback movement in the financial crisis of 1873.

At the first Greenback Convention at Indianapolis in that year, the following demands upon the government were adopted: First, that the national bank-note currency should be withdrawn; second, that the only currency should be of paper, and that currency should be made exchangeable for bonds bearing interest at 3.65 per cent; and third, that coin might be used for the payment of the interest and principal of such bonds, and only such, as expressly called for coin payments.

At the National Greenback Convention held at Indianapolis, Peter Cooper, of New York, and Samuel Cary, of Ohio, were nominated for president and vice president. They received 82,000 votes.

The labor agitation at the time of the great strikes, especially in 1877, considerably reinforced the Greenback movement. It was joined by many labor organizations which until that time had not taken any active part in it. As a result of such coalition a National Greenback-Labor Convention was held at Toledo, Ohio, in 1878. To the Greenback platform were added labor demands, which made the movement very popular also among the wage-earners in the East. The party's ticket polled over 1,000,000 votes, and 14 representatives were sent to Congress. In 1880 the Greenback-Labor party's nominees, James Weaver for president and B. J. Chambers for vice president, got only 300,000 votes, but 8 representatives were elected to Congress.

At the National Convention of the party in 1884 (May 29) a platform was adopted which was partly as follows:

"A joint effort is being made by the old party leaders to overthrow the sovereign constitutional power of the people to control their own financial affairs and issue their own money, in order to forever enslave the masses to bankers and other business. The House of Representatives has passed bills reclaiming nearly one hundred million acres of lands granted to and forfeited by railroad companies. These bills have gone to the Senate, a body composed largely of aristocratic millionaires, who, according to their own party papers, generally purchased their elections in order to protect great monopolies which they represent.

... "We demand the issue of such money (legal-tender notes—greenbacks) in sufficient quantities to supply the actual demand of trade and commerce.

"We want that money which saved our country in time of war, and which has given it prosperity and happiness in peace."

The party's ticket of that year was headed by General B. F. Butler, endorsed also by the Anti-Monopoly organization; he received only 175,000 votes.

After this failure the party began to break up. Many Greenback leaders went over to the old parties, especially in the West, where the farmers constituted the majority of the party, while in the East where the majority was made up of wage-earners, the members turned their main attention to the labor movement proper.

The social philosophy of the Greenbackers was a kind of economic individualism with anarchistic tendencies. The Greenbackers emphasized the individual side of the relations between individuals and society, and emphatically advocated banking reform by which everybody could secure money for his enterprise. But their tactics were opposed to the anarchistic tactics proper. They recognized the state, government, and politics, representing a definite political movement.

In the middle of the eighties there were, in the eastern states, a considerable number of Greenbackers among the members of local unions, especially in New York, still advocating, besides labor demands, the Greenbackers' currency reform.

⁹ Edward Stanwood, *A History of the Presidency*, Boston, 1906, pp. 425 and 426.

THE SOCIALISTS

The most important theoretical group in the labor movement of New York in the middle eighties was the group of Socialists. The majority of early Marxian Socialists in America were German wage-earners. At the end of the sixties they organized in New York the "Allgemeiner Deutscher Arbeiterverein" (the General German Labor Society), which was affiliated for a short time with the National Labor Union. Withdrawing from that body in 1869, it joined the International Working-Men's Association under the name of Section I of New York.

After the financial crisis in 1873 a number of small Socialist parties were organized in the East and Middle West. In 1876, at a representative meeting of those organizations, the Workingmen's Party of the United States, with a Marxist program, was formed. The next year, the party name was changed to the Socialist Labor Party of North America.

After the failures in independent politics and an unsuccessful coalition with the Greenbackers and other radicals in 1880, their political aspirations were much lowered. The hard struggle with the Anarchists at the beginning of the eighties especially absorbed their energy. Besides this, many obstacles stood in their way: first, they were immigrants, looked upon as strangers here; they could not easily understand the American conditions, and many of them could not even speak English; and second, the majority of the American-born wage-earners had the individualistic and small owner's psychology expressed in the desire to start independent enterprises and to "make money",⁷ instead of struggling for another social order. The political methods used in the despotic European countries could not be applied to America, where the people practically had suffrage, civil liberties and a democratic form of government.

Somewhat discouraged in independent politics, the Socialists started in 1884 on another course of activity. They concentrated on organization, agitation and propaganda, or what they termed

⁷ This business spirit of the American masses at that time may be partly explained by the numerous opportunities for small business in the new country in its early history, and by the enterprising spirit of immigrants, many of whom came here to look for individual fortunes.

the education of the masses. The lowest point of their activity was in 1883; they had only 30 sections, with a total membership of about 1500. In 1884 they organized 21 new sections in the various states of the East and Middle West. In 1885 they had already 61 sections.

In the middle eighties the center of their organized movement gathered around the New York *Volkszeitung* under the leadership of its editors, Sergius E. Shevich and Alexander Jonas. The *Volkszeitung* was more moderate, and favored the trade union movement and educational work by the Socialists, while the more radical wing around the Executive Committee of the party and its newly established organ *Der Sozialist*, under the leadership of V. L. Rosenberg, preferred independent political action to the union movement. Still the relations between these two factions were friendly and the influence of the *Volkszeitung* dominated in New York.

At the fifth National Convention in Cincinnati, in October, 1885, a platform was adopted with the following main ideas and demands:⁸ Labor is the self-evident creator of all wealth and civilization. Laborers must enjoy the product of their toil, but the fruits of labor are in a great measure appropriated by the owners of the means of production. Then follows the Marxian criticism of the contemporary social order. To replace this by the Socialistic order the platform demands:

"That the land, the instruments of production (machines, factories, etc.) and all the products of labor, become the common property of the whole people; and that all production be organized cooperatively and be carried on under the direction of the commonwealth; also the cooperative distribution of the products in accordance with the service rendered, and with the just needs of the individuals."

To realize such order it is necessary to gain control of the political power by the wage-earning class. They demanded:

"Abolition of the Presidency, Vice Presidency and Senate of the United States. An Executive Board to be established, whose members are to be elected and may at any time be recalled by the House of Representatives as the only legislative body. The states and

⁸ *Platform and constitution of the Socialistic Labor Party*, adopted at the 5th National Convention in Cincinnati, October, 1885, pp. 1-5.

municipalities to adopt corresponding amendments of their constitutions and statutes;"⁹

direct vote and secret ballots in all elections; universal suffrage without regard to color, creed, or sex; election days to be legal holidays; the principle of minority representation to be introduced; initiative, referendum, and recall of the members of all legislative bodies; administration of justice to be free of charge; abolition of capital punishment; and other democratic demands.

At the same convention a resolution was adopted to the effect that the Socialistic Labor party was to be regarded chiefly as a propagandist party, but the sections themselves were to decide whether to go into politics or not. At the end of the resolution is the following statement:

"Sections participating in any election shall under no circumstances enter into any combination with any other party as against the labor party; and other parties are to be considered as reactionary."

The Socialists very strongly emphasized the labor side of their movement. Besides the socialistic idea the labor demands were given great importance in their platform, and in the latter was also the following statement:

"The Socialistic Labor Party claims the title 'Labor Party' because it recognizes the existence of an oppressed class of wage-workers as its fundamental truth, and the emancipation of this oppressed laboring class as its foremost object."¹⁰

In their constitution was also a requirement that no less than three-fourths of the members of a party section must be wage-earners; this restriction was not applied to farmers.

Their party organization was simple and worked smoothly. A local organization was called a section or branch. Every new member was examined as to whether he knew the party platform and constitution. Every member paid five cents monthly taxes. In each locality or city where two or more sections existed, a central committee was elected. The highest authority was vested in the National Convention of all sections. At this convention the National Executive Committee was elected. The referendum

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

vote was practiced. The party had no president. The presidential duties were performed by the Executive Committee, with the initiative vested in its secretary. The Socialists considered such form of their party organization as the most democratic constitutional government, and in this lies the cause of their opposition to the presidency, vice presidency, and Senate of the United States, favoring instead the National Executive Board constituted of several elected persons.

Recovering from political failures, the Socialists increased their activity along the line of their new course started in 1884. They worked in the labor unions and in any kind of labor organization, opposition to the presidency, vice presidency, and Senate of the their small number, their influence in the labor unions increased rapidly; especially in the Central Labor Union of New York. Their doctrine of the conflict of interests, between the wage-earning class and the capitalist class, was recognized by the majority of the members of the Union, though the latter as a body did not accept the whole Socialistic philosophy. However, the labor demands were the basis of their cooperation.

The above described labor organizations and social philosophies constituted two main, and more or less distinct, movements: An economic on a larger, and a political on a smaller, scale. The first was represented by the Trade Unions and the Knights of Labor; the second, by the Greenbackers and the Socialists.

In the East, especially in New York, an industrial center, all these forms of organization and schools of thought existed side by side. There were yet some minor organizations with radical views, as Land-Nationalizers, Free-Soilers, Anti-Monopolists, a small Singletax Club, and others, but their influence upon the labor movement was insignificant.

CHAPTER IV

THE "GRAND LEGAL ROUND-UP" OF STRIKERS AND
BOYCOTTERS

The industrial advancement in the decade, 1880-1890, was characterized by the introduction of the intensive use of improved machinery, by production on a larger scale, by the extension of the domestic and international markets, and by the increased bargaining power of merchants and manufacturers over consumers and wage earners, resulting from the establishment in increasing numbers of wholesale houses and exchanges, and from the organization of employers' and manufacturers' associations and, finally, monopolistic industrial combinations—trusts, pools, and all sorts of price and other agreements, including banking institutions controlling credit.

Organized capital bore heavily upon labor. Labor legislation was meager. Not only were the few laws enacted to protect labor inadequately enforced, but they were largely declared by the courts unconstitutional or interpreted in such a manner as to operate against labor. The policy of the controlling political parties in that respect was based upon the shortsighted and narrow-minded spirit of money making, a sort of practical materialism.

It is no wonder that such a spirit bore its fruit in political spoils and corruption. The securing of governmental jobs through bribery, or, as it was more mildly expressed, through "investment" (in politics for personal ends) was the accepted mode of procedure and was talked of openly even by the higher officials.¹ Tammany Hall reigned supreme over the municipal

¹ For example, Thomas P. Walsh, a gambler with the nickname "Fatty," was appointed warden of the Tombs (prison). This appointment was received by the public with great dissatisfaction. The labor press protested strongly against it. Ex-coroner W. H. Kennedy met the protest as fol-

government, and nowhere was found such open corruption as in the city of New York.

With the industrial depression the labor movement grew more intense. Reduction of wages and unemployment were common. Cheap immigrant labor, contracted for and imported from other countries, female and child labor, and contract prison labor, were widely employed by manufacturers. A wave of strikes and lockouts spread over the country, and the majority of strikes failed; at the same time failed the nation-wide eight-hour movement of May, 1886. The struggle between opposing forces, employers and employees, was desperate and cruel. On one side were used as weapons, strikes and boycotts; on the other side, lockouts, black-listing, and iron-clad oaths.

How generally these weapons were actually used cannot be definitely stated; in many cases they were employed secretly, which made it impossible to record the data. Only a few official reports speak occasionally of the black-list and iron-clad practices of employers. Nevertheless, the cruelty of these weapons was keenly felt, discussed, and condemned by wage-earners at their meetings and in their press all over the country at that time, with an understanding that these weapons were aimed not so much against individual workingmen as against labor organizations and their concerted actions in general. The black-listed men appeared quite often to be the local labor leaders, either spokesmen or organizers. Such persecution of leaders, among other causes, helped considerably to stir up organized labor.

To understand better the actual situation at that time, it is necessary to explain in brief the immediate underlying causes of the labor excitement in 1886. The Third Annual Report of the Commissioner of Labor² shows the relative numbers of strikes and lockouts and the results of strikes. There were in 1886 twice as many strikes as in 1885, and three times as many as in any

lows: "I do not know why the people are raising such a fuss about this appointment of 'Fatty'. He has been a great service to the County Democracy down in this district, and he ought to have something. I myself have spent a good deal of money in politics, and I think that it is only fair and just that 'Fatty' should have a job. He was promised it and he ought to have it, and there is an end. 'Fatty' got the biggest bulk of money to distribute at the polls."—*The Standard*, No. Jan. 8, 1887.

² *Third Annual Report of the Commissioner of Labor*, 1887, pp. 12-15.

previous year of the period of 1881-1886, and the proportion of failures was nearly the same. Most of the strikes (75 per cent) and their failures occurred in the five principal industrial states: New York, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, Ohio, and Illinois.

The number of employees locked out in 1886 was five times as large as in any previous year during the period of 1881-1886, and the same proportion prevailed in respect to establishments involved in lockouts, 92.98 of which were in the five principal industrial states named.

If we take New York separately we find there the largest number of establishments affected by strikes and lockouts in 1886.³ During the year ending October 31, 1886, the number of establishments in which labor troubles of one kind or another had taken place, was 2,316; the 2,120 strikes included 127,392 workers and affected 2,061 shops, to which it is necessary to add the 59 shops with the "threatened strikes." Conciliation took place in 249 shops, conciliation with employees 81, with the Knights of Labor 321, with unions (a majority with the Central Labor Union) 511, total 1,162; no formal settlement, 20; arbitration, 11; abandoned, 430; pending, 52; blank, 386; grand total, 2,061.⁴

The above data are by no means complete. They include only the numbers of strikes, strikers, and shops, of which official information was received by the Bureau of Statistics of Labor of the state of New York. The more rapid growth of the number of lockouts than that of strikes demonstrates that organized capital was quite aggressive in its conflicts with labor in 1886. We find in the Report of the New York Bureau the following statement in regard to the lockouts in that state for the year 1886:

"Strong and bitter denunciation has been expressed in several portions of the State against employers and corporations who locked out their uncomplaining employees for no other reason than that other employers in the same trade or industry had locked out theirs. The conditions upon which the shops, mills or factories were to be opened were that such and such men or women should leave the trade union or the Knights of Labor Assembly, as the case might be."⁵

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Fourth Annual Report* of the Bureau of Statistics of Labor of the State of New York for the year 1886, Albany, 1887, pp. 418-419.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 417.

How a typical lockout was conducted by the employers' associations is shown in a description on the same page of the report. Cigarmakers were on a strike against the reduction of wages. The strike was followed by a lockout, which lasted from January 20 to February 12, 1886, and in which the leading manufacturers united. The labor union committee was invited to attend a manufacturers' meeting. When the representatives of labor appeared, the chairman of the meeting met them and announced the decision of the manufacturers: "Gentlemen, we have decided to lock out all our hands until the employees of Messrs. L. return to work. This is official." This decision was posted at the several shops. The secretary of the union asked: "Isn't this the very essence of a boycott or conspiracy?"

That the year 1886 represented the culmination of the conflict between organized employers and wage earners, owing to the general conditions above described, and that the state of New York, headed by its metropolis, was the center of that conflict, is further supported by the following quotation from the same report:

"The year 1886 has witnessed a more profound and far more extended agitation among the members of organized labor than any previous year in the history of our country . . . With but rare exceptions organized labor has continued in this state with greater success and vigor than before, to agitate, to strike, and to boycott during the past year. The year 1886 will be forever remembered as one of the greatest importance in the battle waged between capital and labor; the failures and successes of which, let us trust, will not be lost, or fail to serve as lessons of value to the student of social and economic questions."⁶

The intensified struggle between employers and wage earners found expression in the legislative, police, and court activities, or what is termed by the official report as "a grand legal round-up" of strikers and boycotters, which served as fuel to the fire of labor excitement.

In the early history of the state of New York there was no statute regulating disputes between employers and employees, except the laws concerning crimes against public justice and the common law against conspiracy. But as time went on, the

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

courts declared that conspiracies to "injure" and "coerce" were criminal conspiracies,⁷ and in this way the question of criminality of combination in restraint of trade was introduced into practice. Then the statutory law enacted (1828-1830) made combination in restraint of trade criminal.

On July 26, 1881, was adopted the Penal Code, which entirely revolutionized the laws applicable to labor disputes. The conspiracy law was widened directly and indirectly. It provided that an agreement to commit a crime was a misdemeanor.⁸ In 1882 the Penal Code was partly revised and modified and the fifth subdivision in section 168 was added as a new provision. The following specific crimes entirely new to the statute law of the state were included:

"653. A person who, with a view to compel another person to do or to abstain from doing an act which such other person has a legal right to do or to abstain from doing, wrongfully and unlawfully—

"1. Uses violence or inflicts injury upon such other person or his family or a member thereof, or upon his property or threatens such violence or injury; or

"2. Deprives any such person of any tool, implement, or clothing, or hinders him in the use thereof; or

"3. Uses or attempts the intimidation of such person by threats of force,

"Is guilty of misdemeanor."

A misdemeanor could be punished by one year's imprisonment and \$500 fine.⁹

After the gas stokers' strike, the following new provision of the Penal Code was passed:

"673. *Endangering life by refusal to labor.* A person who wilfully and maliciously, either alone or in combination with others, breaks a contract of service or hiring, knowing or having reasonable cause to believe that the possible consequences of his so doing will be to endanger human life or to cause grievous bodily injury or to expose valuable property to destruction or serious injury, is guilty of a misdemeanor."¹⁰

⁷ *Fifth Annual Report of the Bureau of Statistics of Labor of the State of New York*, 1887, p. 670.

⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 653 and 670.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 669.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

In regard to that provision, the quoted official report says:

"It should not have been limited to contracts of service and hiring, however. That makes it look like class legislation."¹¹

A new section in the Penal Code provides:

"675. *Acts not expressly forbidden.* A person who wilfully commits any act which seriously injures the person or property of another, or which seriously disturbs or endangers the public peace or health, or which openly outrages public decency, for which no other punishment is expressly described by this code, is guilty of misdemeanor."¹²

The report comments on the above section:

"The section is very elastic, loose, general, and ambiguous. If all the rest of the Code were repealed, every known crime could be punished under this section. Any act which 'seriously injures' another is a crime under section 675. Under a free construction of the Penal Code the law of conspiracy can be carried to extreme lengths, in cases growing out of labor troubles."¹³

Such was the progress of the criminal laws affecting labor disputes in the state of New York in the first half of the eighties. The laws were partly borrowed from the English laws, but while the latter were progressing "steadily toward the complete elimination of combinations as an element of the criminality in crimes growing out of labor troubles, our law has as steadily tended the other way."¹⁴

The leaders of the Central Labor Union claimed that the Penal Code contained laws with the characteristics of class legislation in favor of organized capital and against organized labor in their disputes, and that the legislatures in the enactment of such laws were influenced directly and indirectly by manufacturers through corrupt lobbying and similar practices. Nevertheless, no matter how one-sided and severe the criminal laws were, peaceful striking, boycotting and picketing were not directly prohibited by law. Organized labor made use of these methods, trying to

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² *Ibid.*, pp. 669 and 670.

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ *Fifth Annual Report of the Bureau of Statistics of Labor of the State of New York*, 1887, p. 670 and 671.

avoid every unlawful act such as violence and threats, not to speak of bloodshed, which occurred in several western cities at that time. That the labor movement in New York at that time was peaceful, though very earnest and pronounced, is pointed out also by the official report.¹⁵

Striking, picketing and boycotting against reduction of wages, lockouts, and so forth, went on. Now it remained for the police and courts to step in and, on the ground of existing criminal sections of the Penal Code to try to check organized labor in its war activities. This they did under the influence and pressure of the manufacturers, who, in their turn were influenced by the depressed industrial conditions.

Public opinion was rather hostile toward organized labor and its struggle, owing to the country-wide wave of strikes and their violence and effectiveness, and, in part, to the fact that the labor press was weak as against the powerful and influential press which was on the side of the manufacturers and consumers, or, as they termed it, "the general public." The labor movement, its real causes, nature, and meaning, were entirely misunderstood by the last named. In its eyes the labor unions, the Knights of Labor, and other organizations were no more than hordes of anarchists and rioters,¹⁶ while the labor movement itself was branded as "unpatriotic," "un-American," imported from starving Europe, etc. There is no doubt that such "opinion" was manufactured mainly by the big newspapers more or less closely connected with the employers' interests. Another cause of such opinion was the public ignorance, against which the weak labor press, read mainly among the organized working people themselves, was quite powerless. That the hostile public opinion served as an encouragement for the police and court activities cannot be questioned.

In 1886 in the city of New York alone, in addition to many unwarranted arrests of strikers, pickets, and boycotters, more than 100 members of labor organizations were indicted for conspiracy, coercion, and extortion. Five members were convicted of extortion and sentenced to the state prison at Sing Sing for extended

¹⁵ *Fourth Annual Report of the Bureau of Statistics of Labor of the State of New York, 1887*, p. 8.

¹⁶ *John Swinton's Paper*, Nov. 7, 1886, p. 1, col. 3.

terms. Six men were convicted of conspiracy to prevent an employer from carrying on a lawful business, and were sentenced to short terms in the city prison or county penitentiary.¹⁷

To demonstrate the character of the police and court activities against organized labor, it is necessary to quote and analyze, in brief only, several typical cases.

On March 18, 1886, the tailors employed by Cavanagh, Sanford & Co., New York, went on strike for the union scale of wages. The strike failed and a boycott was declared. The police began to arrest pickets day after day on different charges, such as disorderly conduct on the street and obstructing the sidewalk. Some of the arrested pickets were fined small amounts and some were discharged for the lack of evidence to support the charges. The picketing went on. Finally, on April 19, a police justice ordered charges of conspiracy to be preferred against the pickets. As a result they were held for the grand jury and soon indicted. In this way all forty-seven tailors were, under the conspiracy charge, subsequently indicted for participation in boycott.¹⁸

On April 5 the Bakers' Union No. 1 declared a boycott against the Gray Bakery, the owner of which refused to recognize the union. A circular distributor was arrested on the street for "refusing to move on", and was fined. The pickets ("sandwich men") were arrested in a body and fined, the justice telling them, however, that they were not convicted of boycotting, but of disorderly conduct on the street. The boycotters did not cease operation till, on April 20, indictments were found by the grand jury against the secretary of the Bakers' Union, the "walking delegate", the "sandwich men," the circular distributor, and others—altogether thirteen men participating in the boycott. They were charged with conspiracy and coercion under sections 168 and 653 of the Penal Code.¹⁹

In the case of the strike and boycott against Mrs. Landgraff, a bakery owner (the case reported as *People vs. Kostka*), 18 members of the Bohemian Bakers' Union were indicted April 9, under sections 168 and 653 of the Penal Code, for coercion and con-

¹⁷ *Fourth Annual Report of the Bureau of Statistics of Labor of the State of New York, 1886, p. 744.*

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 748.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 749 and 752.

spiracy to prevent Mrs. Landgraff from carrying on a lawful trade by threats and intimidation.²⁰

Such wholesale imprisonment of strikers, pickets and boycotters aroused the sentiment of organized labor. They understood that the alleged causes of their arrests and convictions, such as disorderly conduct, refusal to move on, obstructing the sidewalk, or coercion and conspiracy, were merely flimsy pretexts, and that the real object of the police and the courts was the elimination of striking, picketing, and boycotting. Furthermore, they believed that such attacks upon the labor men were made in favor of the employers, and this they considered a very grave injustice to them. Finally they felt that in such attacks the individuals and their interests were not so much involved as the general relations between capital and labor.

The talk of independent labor politics as a remedy against the evil described became general in labor circles, and the element favoring such labor politics again got a foothold in the unions and other labor organizations. This occurred not only in New York, but all over the country, because conditions were very much the same everywhere.

Now came the final blow—the Theiss Case in New York. In March the Carl Sahm Club of musicians (a local assembly of the Knights of Labor under the jurisdiction of District Assembly 49) declared a boycott, after an unsuccessful strike, against George Theiss, a proprietor of an entertainment hall, a music and beer garden, on East 14th Street.

The Waiters' Union and Bartenders' Union also had grievances against Theiss on the ground of low wages, oppressive rules,²¹ and rough handling of employees. Both unions appealed to the Central Labor Union, which tried several times to negotiate and arbitrate. But as Theiss positively rejected, in unbecoming language, any proposal to arbitrate, the Central Labor Union sanctioned a general boycott against Theiss's place.²²

On March 10, several pickets were arrested on a charge of disorderly conduct. But the evidence did not show such conduct,

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 672.

²¹ *John Swinton's Paper*, July 11, 1886, p. 1.

²² *Fourth Annual Report of the Bureau of Statistics of Labor of the State of New York*, 1886, p. 745.

and the prisoners were discharged.²³ The next day more pickets were arrested on a new and different charge, namely, of engaging in a "parade without a permit from the police board."²⁴ Again the justice could not find any proper law to justify the charge, and the prisoners were released.²⁵ The pickets, taught by the previous cases, were very careful to avoid any acts for which they could be convicted by law. And so the boycotting and picketing went on until a brewer named George Ehret, and a certain baker, from whom Theiss bought beer and bread, fearing that the sales of their goods would fall off owing to the boycott, brought about a meeting between Theiss and a committee representing the boycotters and the Central Labor Union, and consisting of the following members: Archibald O'Leary, Charles Beadless, Max Danhouser, Hans Holdorf, and A. Rosenberg. All these men, except O'Leary and Beadless, were connected with the organizations involved in the boycott.

The meeting took place at Ehret's brewery; it lasted about eight hours, and was very formal and businesslike in its character. Ehret presided and his clerk was secretary. All difficulties were talked over and concessions were made by each side, under Ehret's advice; minutes were kept and an agreement was finally reached, written, and undersigned. The last clause of this required Theiss to pay \$1000 to cover the expenses of the boycott, which money was afterward paid.²⁶

This case was made the subject of law proceedings, especially in reference to the \$1000 payment. The grand jury made a presentation with a great deal of rhetorical pathos, stating that a thorough examination had convinced them that the so-called boycott was an accursed exotic, and they urged every effort of the legislature, the bench, the bar, and the press of the land and of every American citizen to aid in exterminating this hydra-headed monster dragging its loathsome length across the continent, sucking the very life-blood from our trade and commerce.²⁷

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 746.

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ *John Swinton's Paper*, July 11, 1886, p. 1.

²⁷ *Fourth Annual Report of the Bureau of Statistics of Labor of the State of New York*, 1886, p. 745.

The members of the Central Labor Union Committee, representing the boycotters, were brought to trial speedily. Paul Wilzig of the Bartenders' Union was first placed before a jury, charged with extortion under sections 552 and 553 of the Penal Code. Judge George C. Barrett presided in the court. He prepared the charges of the court to the jury. His reasoning was in short as follows: The defendants excited *fear* on the part of Theiss by threatening to continue the boycott by a method which injured the Theiss property (his good will), an act which was *intimidation*, and as the money was received by intimidation the defendants were guilty of extortion.

The defendants set forth the arguments that they did not use any violence, force, or threat, except their desire to continue a peaceful boycott, not prohibited by law, unless Theiss should not agree to the terms; that the agreement between the two sides was made by arbitration of a third party and in a most formal, orderly, and peaceful manner; that the money paid was not used for their personal purposes; and that the present case constituted a dispute not between individuals but between the employing and employed classes. These arguments did not have any weight with Barrett and the jury. Louis F. Post, of counsel of law committees of the Central Labor Union at that time, says in a recent article:

"Not only did Judge Barrett seem to influence the jury in this case—perhaps it was not necessary, the jurors being of the employer type—but he disclosed his class animus further by sentencing those innocent-minded workmen."²⁸

The jury convicted the defendants of extortion under sections 552 and 553 of the Penal Code, and Judge Barrett sentenced them, July 2, 1886, to imprisonment and penal servitude in the state prison at Sing Sing for various terms as follows: Paul Wilzig and Hans Holdorf each for two years and six months; Max Danhouser for three years and eight months; A. Rosenberg and Michael Strob each for one year and six months. The two latter, by advice of counsel, pleaded guilty under a stipulation that their rights should be protected upon the record of Wilzig's case to the same extent that his might be.²⁹ Danhouser, pro-

²⁸ *The Public*, Nov. 3, 1911, p. 1126, col. 2.

²⁹ *Fourth Annual Report of the Bureau of Statistics of Labor of the State of New York*, 1886, p. 770.

testing "that he did not steal and would not stultify his manhood by pleading guilty, was visited with the severest penalty of all, precisely as he had been threatened when he insisted upon his constitutional right of trial."³⁰

An appeal for pardon was made by the Central Labor Union on the ground that the convictions were unjust and sentences unduly severe. Governor David Hill said, in allowing the pardon:³¹

"The prosecution was novel in its character, and these were the first convictions of the kind in this state. It may be safely stated that, prior to these convictions, it had not been generally understood that such acts as were committed by the prisoners constituted crimes under the Penal Code.

"It appears that the money alleged to have been extorted was not appropriated by the prisoners. It was not procured for their own personal aggrandizement. It was paid to Wilzig, but not a penny of it was either touched or seen by any of the other persons, and Wilzig paid it all over to his union.

"The compromise or settlement under which the money was paid seemed to lack many of the elements necessary to constitute 'extortion' as it had previously been interpreted by the courts."³²

A part of the general public, not directly interested in the labor struggle and prejudiced neither against capital nor labor, took the viewpoint that the convictions and sentences were unjust.

³⁰ *John Swinton's Paper*, July 11, 1886, p. 1, cols. 5 and 6.

³¹ The sentences were all commuted, Oct. 9, 1886, to imprisonment for the term of 100 days, from July 3, 1886 to Oct. 11, 1886. *Fourth Annual Report of the Bureau of Statistics of Labor of the State of New York*, 1886, p. 775.

³² *Ibid.*, pp. 777, 778.

PART TWO

CHAPTER V

THE POLITICAL UPRISING OF ORGANIZED LABOR

Like the explosion of a shell in the labor circles of New York came Judge Barrett's sentence of the boycotters on July 2, 1886. On the evening of the same day delegates of the Socialist Labor Party, of the Cigarmakers', Bartenders', and Waiters' Unions, and of the Carl Sahm Club, met to call a mass meeting for the purpose of protesting against the action of the judiciary.¹ The call for such a mass meeting through the Central Labor Union was agreed upon unanimously by the gathered representatives of labor. A few days later the Central Labor Union endorsed the call and passed a resolution condemning Judge Barrett's sentence. The mass meeting took place at Cooper Union on July 7. John Swinton, Edward King, John McMackin, and S. E. Shevich were the principal speakers. They all insisted on the necessity of organizing labor politically.

On July 11, 1886, the Central Labor Union of New York and Brooklyn met. A resolution was introduced by Ludwig Jablinowski, cigarmaker, and seconded by G. Block, secretary of the Bakers' National Union, proposing that a committee be appointed to devise the ways and means for forming an independent political labor organization. At the same time this committee was to consider how a daily newspaper in the interest of labor could be brought into life. After a lively discussion, in which the radical element took the initiative and strongly sup-

¹ *The Leader*, Aug. 6, 1887, p. 2.

ported the proposed resolutions, the committee was appointed. It met often and discussed its task from different viewpoints. The main conclusions were: (1) To invite all labor organizations in New York and its vicinity, without consideration of their creed, beliefs or form of organization, to take part in the independent political action of labor, namely, in the New York city election in the coming fall, and (2) to lay the proposition before all local subordinate labor organizations for its thorough discussion by the individual members. These conclusions of the committee were at once accepted by the Central Labor Union. It was decided to invite all labor and other organizations connected with the labor movement—Labor Unions, Knights of Labor, Greenbackers, Anti-monopolists, Socialist-Laborers, Land-Reformers, and others—to discuss the proposition and to send delegates to a labor conference on August 5, 1886, at Clarendon Hall. The discussion in locals was lively and enthusiastic. Delegates were elected and instructed.

The conference was held on the appointed date in Clarendon Hall. Four hundred and two delegates were present, representing one hundred and sixty-five labor organizations with a membership of fifty thousand wage-earners. Among others the Socialist Labor party, as a *bona fide* labor organization, was represented through its delegates, who, according to the above resolution and invitation, were accepted by the conference. John Devitt, of the Painters' Union, called the assemblage to order, and John Morrison, of the Carpet Weavers', was elected as temporary chairman, with James P. Archibald, of the Paper Hangers', as temporary secretary.

When the technique of the organization of the conference was completed, Ludwig Jablinowski of the Cigarmakers' Union, a Socialist, made the motion that an Independent Labor party be formed. The motion was seconded by D. Emrich, George Block, and other Socialists, who among others made the principal speeches. Debate was long and lively. The only opposition was from Typographical Union No. 6, the representatives of which—McKay, Glackin, and William McCabe—spoke against the motion. McCabe favored the idea that organized labor should hold the balance of power and throw its might into the scale of either the Republican or the Democratic party. Finally the vote was

taken. Three hundred and sixty-two delegates expressed themselves as in favor of independent political action by labor, and only forty expressed themselves as against it.

At the next meeting of the conference on August 19, there were present 508 delegates from 115 trade organizations—a delegate from every 100 members. A committee of seven on permanent organization was chosen. This committee appointed as permanent chairman John McMackin, of the Painters', and as permanent secretary James P. Archibald, of the Paper Hangers'.² The committee went to work, and in the meantime the several leaders addressed the delegates. When the committee on permanent organization returned it reported in favor of a new political organization, to be known as the Independent Labor party of New York and vicinity. The report went on to declare a platform of principles in which the "free soil" idea was advocated; a demand was made that the laborers should share in the products of labor. Among other things asked for were a law forbidding the employment of children under fourteen years of age, the enforcement of the eight-hour law, the abolition of the convict labor system, equal pay for both sexes for equal work, the repeal of the conspiracy and tramp laws, a law declaring speculation in food products a criminal act; the abolition of the property qualification for jurors, and the abolition of tenement-house cigarmaking.³

HENRY GEORGE STEPS IN

The labor leaders were looking for a suitable standard bearer in the movement. The opinion prevailed among them that their candidate for mayor should be a labor man, belonging to no particular faction, honest, with a high reputation and widely known. Such a man appeared to be Henry George. Just how he became interested and entered the political field of labor is not known in detail. The authorship of the first suggestion to invite Henry George to become the Labor candidate for mayor is claimed by a newspaper man, Thomas W. Jackson. In an article in the *New York Evening Mail*, June 12, 1911, he speaks of attending in the

² *New York Times*, Aug. 20, 1886, p. 3.

³ *Ibid.*

summer of 1886 a gathering of labor unionists and labor reporters at the cooperative hat store in New York of a strikers' factory in Connecticut. At this gathering he suggested Henry George as the Labor candidate for mayor.

On the 20th of August, Mr. George was asked by the secretary of the Committee on Permanent Organization, Mr. Archibald, if he would accept the Labor nomination for mayor. Mr. George consulted his friends, and among others Mr. Louis F. Post, to whom he said that he would not run unless he could get at least 30,000 votes.

At the meeting of the conference on the 26th of August, McMackin presided and Archibald acted as secretary. The latter had received from Henry George a letter in which he said that he would accept the nomination upon the one condition: "That at least 30,000 citizens should, over their signatures, express the wish that I should become a candidate, and pledge themselves in such case to go to the polls and vote for me."⁴ This statement was accompanied by his views on the singletax, and by some sharp critical remarks on existing conditions.

The letter was received by the conference with enthusiasm. There was not much discussion. It was decided to circulate copies of the letter and to start a canvass from shop to shop and from house to house gathering signatures to a pledge in accordance with the terms of the letter.

The Committee on Platform made a preliminary report. Some suggestions along the line of labor demands were made by several delegates, and the platform was returned to the Committee for further development. The next meeting of the Conference was held in Clarendon Hall on September 2. Mr. McMackin made a speech in favor of the candidacy of Henry George which was met with enthusiasm by the delegates, but on the candidacy nothing was decided definitely. The proposed assessment of the delegates one dollar each and of the union members 25 cents each, to help along the cause of independent political action, was positively decided.

These were the first steps whereby Henry George came into the labor movement, or, more correctly speaking, into the politi-

⁴ Appendix I.

cal phase of this movement. He was welcomed by organized labor for several reasons: His popularity as a powerful writer, especially the influence of his *Progress and Poverty*; his keen interest in and agitation for the Irish cause and the Irish land reform; his singletax theory based upon the land problem—the problem which had played so important a part in the movement of the masses in America; the fact that he was not affiliated with any current faction; and his good reputation. To think that the main cause was his singletax theory, as such, would be erroneous. The singletax as a general reform scheme was not familiar to and was not even understood by the working people. Then again, it would be superficial to think that Henry George was made a standard bearer of labor mainly because he himself had been a wage-earner and closely connected with the trade union movement. He had been a wage-earner, but at this time he was an employer of labor. His relations to the trade union movement were, in general, indifferent. He saw in the political uprising of labor only an opportunity to bring his singletax theory into practical politics; otherwise he was not interested in the labor movement, and its nature, meaning and extent he did not even fully comprehend. As we have seen, he became the standard bearer of organized labor not because of any active desire of his own, and not so much in consequence of an invitation initiated by the rank and file of organized labor, as in obedience to the call of some representatives of middle class people, mostly in liberal professions and converted to the singletax cause. These were radicals, who sympathized with the labor movement and had always had some influence upon it. Henry George's candidacy was rather an accident than an organic outcome of the labor movement itself.

THE SINGLETAX MADE THE ISSUE

The members of the Central Labor Union of New York represented the majority of the delegates to the Labor Conference. Almost every important move at the meetings of the Conference, usually held on Thursdays, was previously discussed and decided upon at the Sunday meetings of the Central Labor Union. The above-mentioned political platform of labor, based mainly upon

labor demands, was a joint product of the Central Labor Union and of the Conference. But this platform, after the discussion on August 26, came up no more at the Conference meetings. Instead a new platform was substituted. This was written by Henry George,⁵ in consultation with the Committee on Platform of the Conference and other leaders in the movement. The singletax was made its main issue.

The next meeting of the Conference, at which this platform was accepted and Henry George nominated, was held September 23, at Clarendon Hall; 175 labor organizations were represented, by 409 delegates. When the meeting was called to order, Frank Farrell, chairman of the Committee on Platform, read the new platform to the conference. It was as follows:

"The delegates of the trade and labor organizations of New York, in conference assembled, make this declaration:

"1. Holding that the corruptions of government and the impoverishment of labor result from neglect of the self-evident truths proclaimed by the founders of this Republic that all men are created equal and are endowed by their Creator with unalienable rights, we aim at the abolition of the system which compels men to pay their fellow-creatures for the use of God's gifts to all, and permits monopolizers to deprive labor of natural opportunities for employment, thus filling the land with tramps and paupers, and bringing about an unnatural competition which tends to reduce wages to starvation rates and to make the wealth producer the industrial slave of those who grow rich by his toil.

"2. Holding, moreover, that the advantages arising from social growth and improvement belong to society at large, we aim at the abolition of the system which makes such beneficent inventions as the railroad and telegraph a means for the oppression of the people, and the aggrandizement of an aristocracy of wealth and power. We declare the true purpose of government to be the maintenance of that sacred right of property which gives to everyone opportunity to employ his labor and security that he shall enjoy its fruits; to prevent the strong from oppressing the weak, and the unscrupulous from robbing the honest; and to do for the equal benefit of all such things as can be better done by organized society than by individuals; and we aim at the abolition of all laws which give to any class of citizens advantages, either judicial, financial, industrial, or political, that are not equally shared by all others.

"3. We further declare that the people of New York City should

⁵ *The Public*, Nov. 3, 1911, p. 1128.

have full control of their own local affairs; that the practice of drawing grand jurors from one class should cease, and the requirements of a property qualification for trial jurors should be abolished; that the procedure of our courts should be so simplified and reformed that the rich shall have no advantage over the poor; that the officious intermeddlings of the police with peaceful assemblages should be stopped; that the laws for the safety and sanitary inspection of buildings should be enforced; that in public work the direct employment of labor should be preferred to the system which gives contractors opportunity to defraud the city while grinding their workmen, and that in public employment equal pay should be accorded to equal work without distinction of sex.

"4. We declare the crowding of so many of our people into narrow tenements at enormous rents, while half the area of the city is yet unbuilt upon to be a scandalous evil, and to remedy this state of things all taxes on buildings and improvements should be abolished, so that no fine shall be put upon the employment of labor in increasing living accommodations, and that taxes should be levied on land irrespective of improvements, so that those who are now holding land vacant shall be compelled either to build on it themselves, or give up the land to those who will.

"5. We declare, furthermore, that the enormous value which the presence of a million and a half of people gives to the land of this city belongs properly to the whole community; that it should not go to the enrichment of individuals and corporations, but should be taken in taxation and applied to the improvement and beautifying of the city, to the promotion of the health, comfort, education, and recreation of its people, needs of a great metropolis. We also declare that existing means of transit should not be left in the hands of corporations which, while gaining enormous profits from the growth of population, oppress their employes and provoke strikes that interrupt travel and imperil the public peace, but should by lawful process be assumed by the city and operated for public benefit.

"6. To clear the way for such reforms as are impossible without it, we favor a Constitutional Convention, and since the ballot is the only method by which in our Republic the redress of political and social grievances is to be sought, we especially call for such changes in our elective methods as shall lessen the need of money in elections, discourage bribery, and prevent intimidation.

"7. And since in the coming most important municipal election independent political action affords the only hope of exposing and breaking up the extortion and speculation by which a standing army of professional politicians corrupt the public whom they plunder, we call on all citizens who desire honest government to join us in an effort to

secure it, and to show for once that the will of the people may prevail even against the money and organization of banded spoilsmen."⁶

After the reading of the platform there was a short discussion and it was accepted by the Conference. Then the nomination of candidates for mayor was taken up. James H. Casserly, of the American Order of National Carpenters and Joiners, proposed Henry George. After prolonged and enthusiastic cheers, Frank Farrell seconded the nomination, making a short appeal to workmen to stand by Henry George and carry him on to victory. Half a dozen delegates spoke in favor of the candidate. The names of James J. Coogan and W. S. Thorn were placed in nomination and seconded.

The vote was as follows: For Henry George, 360; for Coogan 31; and for Thorn, 18.

An Executive Committee was elected to take charge of Henry George's canvass. Before the adjournment, a short letter written by Henry George was read to the conference. The letter was addressed to a delegate, Bogart, and concluded with this statement: "I have not sought any nomination, and if I accept one it will only be for the sake of advancing principles I believe in."⁷

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PLATFORM

The singletax was made the main issue, and on it rested the whole reform scheme of the existing economic order. The equal natural opportunities to all and the maintenance of the sacred rights of property, except land, were demanded. These points in the platform belonged to Henry George and his followers, as Singletaxers. But there were also in the platform certain labor demands, economic as well as political. These expressed the immediate demands of the labor unions, Knights of Labor and other labor organizations.

The confiscation of land values for the benefit of the general public, as a confiscation of a kind of means of production,⁸ and the demand for the public ownership of the means of transportation and communication, besides labor demands, were to satisfy

⁶ *The George-Hewitt Campaign*, pp. 12-15.

⁷ *New York Sun*, Sept. 24, 1886, p. 1.

⁸ In this sense the singletax was accepted by the Socialists, at first.

the Socialists, who saw at first in the singletax theory a "partial Socialism."⁹

The Greenbackers did not include any direct clause for currency reform, except the demand for the equal share in "financial advantage" incorporated in the platform, but as the platform was written in a radical spirit and contained several demands which the Greenbackers had always favored, they agreed to it.

It is evident that it was a kind of compromise platform. Property rights were declared sacred, but property rights in land ownership were denied entirely; even against private ownership of public utilities a negative stand was taken. Then again, if the singletax were realized, from the viewpoint of the singletaxers there would be no need for special labor demands; every member of society then would be a laborer, and all natural opportunities would be equally open to all, and, of course, "natural" competition must not be checked. What end, then, did the labor demands in the platform serve? Possibly, they served for the consummation of the compromise between the two conceptions of labor, the one which meant that everyone was a laborer except landowners as such, the singletax conception of labor, and the other meaning the class of wage-earners who own neither land nor capital—the labor union and Socialist conception of labor.

At any rate, if the parties allied in the movement were not fully satisfied with the platform, they were satisfied enough to stand shoulder to shoulder and to make a rousing and enthusiastic political campaign; after all, actual, real needs are more powerful in moving the masses than are principles, philosophical doctrines, and leaders, although these also are necessary for success. In the present case, the movement was in its nature purely a labor movement in the proper sense of this term, and immediate labor demands, economic and political, constituted the main-spring of the movement.

It is of some interest to note that the original Clarendon Hall Platform, read at the meeting of the conference on September

⁹ Lawrence Gronlund, *Insufficiency of Henry George's Theory*, New York, 1887, p. 8.

23, contained at the end the following clause: "We hold farther that the emancipation of labor will be accomplished by the workmen themselves."¹⁰ It is conceivable how the Singletaxers and Socialists (also labor unionists) could agree on this clause, differing only in regard to the concept of labor. But this clause was very soon dropped, it is not known under what circumstances.

CHICKERING HALL MEETING OF THE OUTSIDE SUPPORTERS

On October 1, in Chickering Hall, was held a mass meeting of the radical representatives of the middle-class people to support Henry George's candidacy. The gathering was quite an inspiring event, 2300 people being present. At the end of the meeting a resolution was adopted, indorsing the candidacy of Henry George.

THE ACCEPTANCE OF THE NOMINATION

Henry George formally accepted the nomination by organized labor at the meeting of the conference on October 5, 1886, at Cooper Union. All the seats, the stage, and the aisles were occupied; even the streets near the hall were crowded. In full view of the audience were placed the rolls containing the 34,000 signatures of voters for Henry George's candidacy for mayor. The chairman of the Executive Committee, John McMackin, called the meeting to order. The chairman of the Chickering Hall meeting, Rev. John W. Kramer, in a short speech assured organized labor of the support of those whom he represented in its efforts for good government and industrial emancipation by political methods. Then McMackin made a short speech, in which he tendered the nomination by organized labor to Henry George.

Then Mr. George spoke. He said, in part:

"When my nomination for Mayor of New York was first talked of, I regarded it as a nomination which was not to be thought about. I did not desire to be mayor of New York . . . I saw what practical politics meant; I saw that under the conditions as they were, a man

¹⁰ *New Yorker Volkszeitung*, Sept. 24, 1886, p. 1.

who would make a political career must cringe and fawn and intrigue and flatter, and I resolved that I would not so degrade my manhood but when the secretary of this nominating convention came to me and said, 'You are the only man upon whom we can unite I could not refuse I asked for some tangible evidence That evidence you have given me. All I asked and more'

Henry George in his address described in picturesque language the political corruption in New York, adding:

"Look over our vast city, and what do we see? On one side a very few men richer by far than it is good for them to be, and on the other side a great mass of men and women struggling and worrying and wearying to get a most pitiful living."

The cause of such misery Mr. George explained as being found in private ownership of and speculation in land, stating that the remedy for such evil was the singletax. He continued:

"Here is the heart of the labor question, and until we address ourselves to that, the labor question never can be solved We are beginning a movement for the abolition of industrial slavery Let us, therefore stand together'"¹¹

After the main address Henry George made short speeches to the crowds on the streets.

To the Executive Committee for the direction of the political campaign by organized labor was added the committee elected at the Chickering Hall meeting.

Thus the independent political action by organized labor was launched; the necessary organization effected, the platform accepted, a suitable candidate for the mayoralty found, and the campaign began.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 19-29.

CHAPTER VI

THE MAYORALTY CAMPAIGN BY ORGANIZED LABOR
IN 1886

CAMPAIGN FUNDS

Besides the taxes of the members of unions, another source was found in individual donations by workingmen and in penny collections—by passing the hat—at meetings of workingmen, especially at the political mass meetings.¹ But the money secured in this way was not enough to meet the usual legitimate campaign expenses—printing and distributing ballots, and so forth. The deficit was met by several close friends of Henry George, as, for example, Thomas G. Shearman and Tom L. Johnson. Some money, though in small sums, came through the mails from outside sympathizers. Most of the campaign work was done by volunteers without pay. Everyone who sympathized with the campaign tried to do or to give something for its success. In this way were met the campaign expenses, which were really small as compared with those of the opposing parties, but which were heavy in comparison with the resources of the workingmen.

CAMPAIGN PRESS—THE LEADER

At the starting of the campaign, the need of an English campaign daily paper became a genuine necessity. This had been anticipated in a resolution introduced by Ludwig Jablinowski, cigarmaker, at the meeting of the Central Labor Union, July 11, 1886. The resolution was realized very soon after the beginning of the campaign. A new labor daily paper was called into life under the title of *The Leader*. The Central Labor Union came again to the front with a contribution of \$1000, and the affiliated

¹ *The Public*, Nov. 3, 1911, p. 1129.

unions followed suit—the Carpenters' contributed \$1500 and other unions \$100 each for the new labor daily. Among the individual contributors were Socialists, labor unionists, Knights of Labor, Singletaxers, Greenbackers, and many other sympathizers not affiliated with the labor movement. However, the Central Labor Union² and individual unions, especially their radical wing, constituted the majority of the contributors. The financial side of *The Leader* was organized independently of any existing organization, in the form of the shareholding Leader Company. This was incorporated under the New York law for corporations without profit, each shareholder being entitled to only one vote, irrespective of the number of shares he had—a democratic rule adhered to by the laboring people all the world over. Louis F. Post was elected by the shareholders editor in chief.

The Leader at its beginning repudiated the idea that the movement was a class movement. The struggle "is in fact between the masses and the classes", meaning under the latter³ term the political corruptionists of all sorts.

The circulation of the *Leader* fluctuated between 30,000 and 50,000. The first copy was sold in the number of 35,000 and the second of 52,000⁴ and it was almost self-supporting. The small deficit which occasionally occurred was very easily covered by donations and by the income from *The Leader* fairs and dances organized for that purpose by labor unions.

The small *Leader* and the yet smaller *Volkszeitung* in German and the *Irish World*⁵ constituted the sole campaign press for organized labor. This was too weak as compared with the rich, powerful and widely read press of the opposing parties, Democratic and Republican.

The entire press of the old parties took a very hostile stand toward the political movement of organized labor; especially did

² *The Leader* was recognized as "the organ of the Central Labor Union" in New York. No other organization was to control *The Leader*.—*The Leader*, Nov. 8, 1886, p. 1.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *The Leader*, Oct. 20, 1886, p. 2.

⁵ A paper very ably edited by Patrick Ford for the Irish cause in Ireland and the Irish immigrants in America. At the beginning of the mayoralty campaign the Irish World strongly supported it.

the *Daily Illustrated Graphic*, the *Evening Post* and *Harper's Weekly* severely attack the labor movement and its standard bearer, Henry George, calling him another Jack Cade and expressing the fear that he might "get a vote large enough to demoralize the officers of the law and diminish the protection we now enjoy against the mob violence."⁶ *The Sun* reported that Henry George had said in a speech that the bloody French Revolution would now repeat itself in America. This report was quoted by other papers, again and again, for a long time, notwithstanding its inconsistency with the political principles put forward by organized labor and in spite of direct denials by Henry George.

In general, the press of the old parties under the issue "to save society from mob violence" branded the organized labor behind the movement as "hordes of anarchists" and their standard bearer in the campaign, Henry George, as "marauder," an "assailant of other people's rights," a "leveller," a "robber of the poor," a "revolutionist," a "man who attacks the sacred foundation of property," a "recreant of liberty," and an "apostle of anarchy and destruction," whose purpose is "to array workmen against millionaires."⁷

A story even was created by some San Francisco papers and readily quoted by several New York papers to the effect that Henry George had had some connection with piracy. As the tale was obviously too ridiculous to be believed, it was soon dropped.⁸

The Leader thus stood on firm ground when it pointed out that "Some papers make out Henry George to be an insane man, with a torch in one hand and a knife in the other, yelling for the rich man's blood."⁹ While the independent political movement of organized labor was so pitilessly battered by the press of old parties it was not left without critical attention by the other side, the Anarchists. The widely known German Anarchist, Johann Most, wrote in his paper *Freiheit*:

"George's election would not change an iota in the present social

⁶ *The Life of Henry George*, New York, 1904, p. 410.

⁷ *The Life of Henry George*, New York, 1904, p. 476.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 477.

⁹ *The Leader*, Oct. 20, 1886, p. 2.

system. A man who desires to bring about an improvement must proclaim *the overthrow of all existing laws*, and not the promising to carry them out, as George has done. And who is George, anyhow? Only look at the gang who are supporting him: Social quacks, Knights of Labor, Trade Unionists, school teachers, professors, priests! A fine assortment, indeed. That is sufficient for us. By a man's company you may judge what he is himself."¹⁰

In this manner the independent political movement of organized labor was under a cross fire in the periodical press. From one side it was bombarded by the powerful press of the old parties, from the other by the Anarchists' paper.

OPPOSING PARTIES

At first the politicians of the old parties and their press refused to take the independent political labor movement seriously. At least, one gets such an impression from the reports in the large New York dailies on the labor meetings at which independent political action was then being discussed. But when the movement grew wider, especially when the Labor Conference was organized, the preliminary meetings of which were earnest, lively and fairly attended, and finally, when Henry George was nominated as the representative of organized labor, for whose candidacy more than 30,000 pledges were so easily secured, the local Democratic and Republican leaders became greatly alarmed. The joking mood of their press was changed to one of serious attention to the new movement of labor.

DEMOCRATIC PARTY

The local Democratic party was divided at that time into two main factions, Tammany Hall and the County Democracy, which quarreled with each other. Their first joint move was an attempt to bribe Henry George, not long before his formal nomination. This was attempted through the agency of William M. Ivins, then Chamberlain of the city of New York. A few days before his death Henry George made the following statement:

"Mr. Ivins insisted that I could not possibly be elected mayor of New York, no matter how many people might vote for me; that the

¹⁰ *The Leader*, Oct. 28, 1886, p. 1.

men who voted knew nothing of the real forces that dominated New York. He said that I could not possibly be counted in. He offered in behalf of Tammany Hall and the County Democracy that if I would refuse the nomination for mayor, they would run me for congress, select a city district in which the nomination of the two was equivalent to election; that I should be at no expense whatever, but might go to Europe or anywhere I willed, and when I came back should receive a certificate of election to the House of Representatives."¹¹

Henry George refused the bribe. The Democratic leaders were not afraid that Henry George could be elected, but they did not like that the movement should "raise hell,"¹² as they termed the consequences of the near victory of labor. The Tammany Convention took place October 11. A number of delegates favored the nomination of Henry George, but the Tammany leaders paid no attention to those voices. Yet they were somewhat afraid to put forward a candidate of their own. Therefore they nominated and "steam-rolled" a man of the other faction—the County Democracy—Abram S. Hewitt, of the large iron manufacturing firm of Cooper, Hewitt & Company, who had been congressman from New York for years. After the County Democracy had indorsed his nomination, a joint committee consisting of the leaders of both democratic factions visited Mr. Hewitt at his own request. To this committee Mr. Hewitt read his letter of acceptance, in which he said that a new issue had been suddenly sprung upon the community. An attempt had been made to organize one class of the citizens against all other classes, and to place the government of the city in the hands of men willing to represent the special interest of the laboring class to the exclusion of the just rights of the other classes even though a large majority of all classes are owners of property, either real or personal. Any attempt upon the right of property is therefore directed by a small minority against the great majority. The injurious effects, arising from the conclusion that any considerable proportion of our people desire to substitute the idea of Anarchists, Nihilists, Communists, Socialists and mere theorists for the democratic principle of individual liberty, would react with the greatest severity upon those who depend upon their daily

¹¹ Published reply to statement made in the newspapers by A. S. Hewitt, Oct., 1897. *The Life of Henry George*, New York, 1904, p. 463.

¹² *Ibid.*

labor for their daily bread; that if the dreams of these theorists could be realized, the chief sufferers would be the workingmen whose condition they propose and undoubtedly hope to improve; that between capital and labor there never is, and never can be, any antagonism; they are natural and inseparable allies; but between capitalists, or those who control capital, and laborers, there may be a conflict of interests, which, like all other disputes, must be adjusted by mutual concessions, or by the operation of law, that this was the issue,

"which as I understand the action of the Democratic party in placing me in nomination, has forced its leading organizations to a patriotic union which might otherwise have been impossible. It behooves the people of this city to pass sentence of condemnation in no uncertain tones upon the effort to array class against class and to unsettle the foundations upon which its business and its security rest."¹³

In conclusion he thanked the press for the manner in which his nomination was received.

The above issue was repeated and expanded by Mr. Hewitt at the Democratic ratification meeting, October 22, when he said in part:

"So far as my life is concerned, the riches which I have accumulated have been used in giving employment to labor, and—let the record go down—every dollar that I own today, without exception, is employed in giving occupation to men who are willing to work for their living If men worked more and talked less there would not be half the trouble I am told that I am a kind of millionaire and I saw it stated by Henry George that the millionaires of the city were willing to supply an unlimited amount of money for this canvass. I have not yet seen or heard of any of these millionaires. But if this fight is to be fought as it ought to be fought, so as to lead to a glorious victory, then every millionaire ought to put up the cash."¹⁴

Mr. Hewitt then went on to criticize the Republicans for taking an independent part in the campaign, thereby splitting the vote against Henry George. "There is not a man in this city who thinks that Roosevelt has any chance against him. It is not a fight between the Republicans and Democrats. This fight is

¹³ *George-Hewitt Campaign*, New York, 1886, pp. 31-37.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 39-42.

between Henry George and Abram S. Hewitt.”¹⁵ (which meant between labor and capital). Mr. Hewitt blamed Theodore Roosevelt, a “rich and well-born, highly educated and absolutely honest man,” for not attacking Henry George and his doctrines. “These rich Republicans and these rich millionaires—nay, have they not at the Union League Club indorsed Mr. Roosevelt? . . . I am the candidate of every honest and respectable man in New York.”¹⁶

It thus becomes obvious that Mr. Hewitt was clear sighted enough to recognize and understand the real nature of the independent political movement of organized labor. To him it was a class movement, and meant the struggle between labor and capital, taking the two latter not in the sense of the physical agents of production, but in the sense of employees and employers, or, in other words, wage earners and capitalists. He, representing the interests of the latter, being himself a big capitalist, naturally opposed the labor movement as dangerous to his class interests, and fought it hard and condemned it in harsh words. For him the class struggle between labor and capital was the issue, although for practical reasons he preferred to put it in a different form: To save society from mob violence by Anarchists, Nihilists, Communists, Socialists and mere theorists—one way of saving the employers’ interests from the onslaught of labor. He rejected the Singletax issue and almost entirely ignored the secondary issue of political corruption which figured so prominently in the Clarendon Hall platform. He fought the battle in the campaign under his own issue “to save society!”

REPUBLICAN PARTY

The Democrats invited the Republicans to unite against the labor candidate. But the Republicans, as a party, refused to do so, and nominated Theodore Roosevelt as their own candidate for mayor. As the main battle was going on between Henry George and Abram S. Hewitt, Mr. Roosevelt did not make much of a personal canvass. Most important are the interviews given out by him for the news reporters. In these he branded the la-

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 42.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 43.

bor theories as "crude, vicious and unAmerican";¹⁷ denied that the masses of the American people were in such bad condition as the labor leaders claimed, and also denied that there were classes in America. In reply *The Leader* characterized his views as a result of his ignorance. "While, he (Mr. Roosevelt) has been fighting Jake Hess for control of the Republican machine in the twenty-first district and shooting game out West, he has had no time to study social problems . . . he evidently knows nothing of political economy."¹⁸

The Democrats tried to secure votes from the Republican ranks for Mr. Hewitt, but their endeavors were not very successful. Mr. Roosevelt fell only about twenty-five thousand votes behind the usual Republican vote, a part of which went over to Henry George.

IRVING HALL DEMOCRATS

There was a small faction of Democrats which had separated from Tammany in the days of Tweed. This faction nominated their leader, Robert B. Nooney, for President of the Board of Aldermen, but the united Tammany Hall and County Democracy ignored these so-called Irving Hall Democrats and nominated Mr. Beekman as their own candidate for that office. This fact led to the endorsement of Henry George by the Irving Hall Democrats. They met in convention, October 19, nominated Rufus W. Peckman for the court of appeals, and adopted a resolution indorsing Henry George for mayor. Prior to this resolution, Henry George was asked to give his opinion on such an indorsement. He accepted it without giving any pledges, and said: "Whoever accepts me must accept me as the candidate of organized labor."¹⁹

A week later he addressed the Irving Hall ratification meeting, saying in part, that "We are making history in this campaign. Again, the true democracy, the party of Thomas Jefferson and Andrew Jackson, is coming to the front."²⁰ Henry

¹⁷ *The Leader*, Oct. 28, 1886, p. 3.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, Oct. 26, 1886, p. 2.

¹⁹ *George-Hewitt Campaign*, p. 125.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 126.

George very often referred in his speeches to the above-named former presidents as the representatives of a true democracy, to restore which he considered to be a prime necessity for the general welfare of the American nation.

HENRY GEORGE CLUBS AND DISTRICT ASSOCIATIONS

At the beginning of the campaign, especially after the nomination of Henry George for mayor, there appeared, here and there in the city, Henry George Clubs. They were mainly organized by radical men of liberal professions for the purpose of studying the land problem from the standpoint of the singletax, and also to help along the political campaign of organized labor. Especially earnest in the campaign work was the Henry George Bohemian Club. The District Associations were organized for purely campaign purposes. They distributed literature and ballots, organized mass meetings, and did other necessary campaign work.

If the strength of these clubs and associations can not be compared with that of trade unions, nevertheless their help was useful for the success of the campaign.

OPEN EXCHANGE OF LETTERS BETWEEN HENRY GEORGE AND ABRAM HEWITT

Henry George replied in an open letter to the attack upon the labor movement made by Mr. Hewitt, and said in part as follows:

"The great bugbear in your mind seems, however, to be that this is a class movement, which, because it is a class movement, is a direct attack upon social order * * * You have heard so much of the working class that you evidently forget that the working class is in reality not a class, but *the mass*, and that any political movement in which they engage is not that of one class against other classes, but as one English statesman has happily phrased it, a movement of the 'masses against the classes.' I do not stand as the candidate of handworkers alone. Among the men who have given me the most truly democratic nomination given to an American citizen in our time are not only handworkers, but workmen of all kinds—editors, reporters, teachers, clergymen, artists, authors, physicians, store-keepers, mer-

chants—in short, representatives of all classes of men who earn their living by the exertion of their hand and head.”²¹

Henry George then proposed to Hewitt to discuss jointly before the public the issues involved in the campaign. Mr. Hewitt in his written answer to the above letter of Henry George, October 19, rejected the challenge on the ground that he had sufficient trust in the voters of New York without any personal canvass. He then criticised the singletax theory, calling it “a system of downright robbery.”

To this letter Henry George replied, October 20, attacking existing evils, especially the corruption exercised by politicians, and again stating that the labor movement was not a class movement at all. “It is, in truth, a movement against the domination of a class.”²²

Mr. Hewitt in his next letter, October 21, once more stated that the political movement of labor was “an unmistakable effort to array class against class, the direful consequences of which no man knows better than yourself. In your frantic desire for office you seem not to hesitate to wreck society to its foundation.” Then Mr. Hewitt, in an indirect way, defended the politicians, the corruption of which Henry George attacked. In conclusion Mr. Hewitt stated that “revolution, confiscation and robbery (meaning the singletax) are not less ruinous to honest labor when they are disguised as a fantastic combination of poverty and progress.”²³

In his final open letter Henry George rejected the personal attacks upon him and disclaimed responsibility for the incorrect quotations from his speeches. He regretted that Mr. Hewitt in his letters had ignored the question of political corruption and that he had refused to discuss jointly the issues at a public meeting.

Such an open and lively exchange of letters between two leading candidates greatly helped to arouse public interest in the coming election, and this was a considerable gain for the labor movement, since the Democratic party hardly profited anything by it. Mr. Hewitt obviously was at a loss on two points: when

²¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 46–50.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 59.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 67.

he ignored the political corruption known almost to everybody, and when he declined to discuss the issues before a public meeting. Henry George was shrewd enough in his letters to return again and again to these weak points in his opponent's letters and to emphasize them. The general impression which one gets from the comparison of the letters of both sides is that the moral strength was on the side of Henry George. His weak points were that he could not force the singletax as the main issue of the movement and that he did not understand the nature of the movement at the head of which he happened to be.

DEMOCRATIC MEETINGS AND SPEECHES

At the beginning of the campaign Mr. Hewitt declined to make any personal canvass. But soon after seeing the active and offensive campaign led by his main opponent, Henry George, and especially after his open correspondence with the latter, he decided to go out and make public speeches. The Democratic meetings lacked enthusiasm and were not numerous. Only one was held in the open air.

In his public speeches Mr. Hewitt added only some minor points to those treated in the open correspondence. At the Tammany Hall ratification meeting, October 26, at which a resolution was adopted declaring that the duty of the Democratic party was to overthrow the labor movement at the polls,²⁴ Mr. Hewitt in his speech defended the American two-party system, and blamed Henry George for creating a third, unnecessary and even harmful for American liberty. He then defended the Tammany Hall people, saying: "You have known Tammany Hall for many years; and did they ever drive men to the polls like slaves to vote for any man? What is the penalty of disobedience? They are never more to be tolerated in the society of their fellow-workingmen."²⁵ After this he returned to the issue of class movement, criticizing Henry George for not accepting it: "He tells me there is no class movement. When I charged him that he said that it was a class movement he denied it."²⁶

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 91.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 93.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

At the meeting at Steinway Hall, October 29, a resolution was adopted beginning with the following statement:

"In the coming election, by the candidacy of Henry George the business interests of the city are menaced; the security of property is threatened, and subversion of law and order is openly advocated under specious appeals to the passion and prejudice of class."²⁷

In his speech Mr. Hewitt pointed out that the differences in capacities and wealth among the people were due to the laws of Divine Providence and, therefore, the preaching to one class the doctrine of hate ought not to take place. In his speech at a meeting of Germans, on the same evening, Mr. Hewitt characterized the labor movement in the following terms: "The demon of discord, hate, anarchy, and the enemy of all mankind threatens and the anarchists and communists are rearing their heads."²⁸ But he expressed hope that Henry George would not defeat "the purposes of the Almighty."

How much Mr. Hewitt gained by his public speeches is not easy to say. Although his meetings were far from crowded, the press carried his speeches far and wide. While he did not add anything of importance to the thoughts expressed in his letters, nevertheless he apparently succeeded in frightening the business men with the labor movement, which to them was daily assuming more and more alarming proportions.

CONFLICT WITH THE AUTHORITIES OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

Edward McGlynn was born in New York of Irish parentage. He studied in the College of The Propaganda at Rome for priesthood, after which he was ordained at first as assistant and afterwards as parish priest of St. Stephen's Church, New York. He was converted to the singletax theory by reading *Progress and Poverty*. Later he met Henry George and they became intimate friends. McGlynn was a strong personality and an impressive orator. In the Singletax agitation he came, in importance, next to Henry George.

At the Chickering Hall meeting, October 1, McGlynn delivered an eloquent address, strongly indorsing the candidacy of Henry

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 96.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 102.

George. After that, the United Democracy attempted to create a prejudice among Protestants, saying that the Catholic Church, through Henry George, was seeking to get control of New York politics. This rumor did not have any effect. The Protestant supporters of Henry George were quite numerous and knew the real situation. Realizing soon this fact, the United Democracy undertook to make it appear that the Catholic Church was opposed to Henry George, and that Fr. McGlynn had withdrawn his support from the labor movement. To refute this rumor, Fr. McGlynn gave out a lengthy interview in which he spoke strongly in favor of Henry George and his land reform scheme. In regard to Henry George he said:

"Large as his head is, he has, if anything, a heart bigger than his head. It is the wonderfully humanitarian, charitable, and, I may say, with all reverence, Christlike character of the man's heart that has given the peculiar bent and direction to his genius . . . It is this that makes him the prophet and the apostle of the magnificent gospel of justice to the poor, to the disinherited, to the workingmen (to all who work, whether with their heads or with their hands), to all those who have to pay rent to landlords . . . I believe that Mr. George is destined to be, and at no distant day, the President of the United States."²⁹

This interview evoked great alarm among the Tammany Hall people. Joseph J. O'Donohue, chairman of Tammany Hall's Committee on Resolutions, wrote a letter to the Right Rev. Monsignor Thomas S. Preston, Vicar-General of the Catholic Church, asking from him information if it was true that the Catholic clergy were in favor of the candidacy of Henry George. The Vicar-General answered, October 25, stating that there was no question as to the position of the Catholic clergy in New York:

"The great majority of the Catholic clergy in this city are opposed to the candidacy of Mr. George. They think his principles unsound and unsafe, and contrary to the teachings of the church. I have not met one among the priests of his archdiocese who would not deeply regret the election of Mr. George to any position of influence. His principles, logically carried out, would prove the ruin of the workingmen he professes to befriend . . . And although we never interfere directly in elections, we would not wish now to be misunderstood at a time when the best interests of society may be in danger."³⁰

²⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 129-132.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 133.

This letter was circulated in front of Catholic churches and among Catholic worshippers on their return from service. The Tammany Hall press and politicians saw to it that the letter was made very widely known. Its sole purpose was to support the Tammany people as against the efforts of organized labor and their candidate, Henry George. The conflict between Henry George and the Catholic Church afterwards grew much wider, as we shall see in the next chapter.

LABOR MEETINGS AND SPEECHES OF HENRY GEORGE

The mass meetings organized by labor organizations and their leaders for campaigning purposes differed in character and size from those of the other parties. They were numerous and usually large. Most of them were held in the open air, usually on the street corners. From the system by which one speaker followed another, speaking at several meeting places in a night, the labor campaign got its nickname of the "tail-board-campaign." The common people, women and men, gathered in hundreds and often in thousands around a place from which the shifting speakers addressed the crowd.

This was a real educational campaign. Labor conditions, political corruption, democracy, singletax and other such topics were widely discussed. After every address some questions were put by the listeners and answered by the speaker. After his acceptance speech, Henry George delivered his first campaign speech before a densely packed mass meeting at Chickering Hall, October 22. He explained at length his singletax theory and existing conditions under the private ownership of land. In reference to the latter he stated: "Here is the primary injustice—the root of all that is evil in what is commonly called the conflict between labor and capital."³¹ But if the singletax should be realized then it would "more than anything else, promote general prosperity, raise wages, and bring about a condition of general comfort."³² After this lengthy and eloquent speech the listeners asked some questions. Upon the question what had the theories of Henry George to do with the campaign, the latter

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 79.

³² *Ibid.*

answered: "They have this to do with the campaign: Mr. Hewitt says that I ought to be beaten on account of my theories—that I am a mere theorist. My election will forward those theories simply by increasing the discussion on them."³³

Among the campaign stories manufactured by the United Democracy against Henry George during the last few days of the campaign was one to the effect that T. V. Powderly, then the General Master Workman of the Knights of Labor, was opposed to the election of Henry George. At the beginning of the campaign, and also at this time his absence was easily explained as an indication of his opposition to Henry George. When this rumor reached Mr. Powderly he immediately telegraphed to his friends in New York to call a mass-meeting, which he wanted to address. This meeting was called on the eve of the election of November 1. Mr. Powderly spoke very favorably for the independent political action, condemned political corruption, and strongly indorsed the candidacy of Henry George. "Vote early tomorrow morning for yourself, your family, your country, and your God, in the person of Henry George."³⁴

THE ELECTION AND VOTERS

Election day was the second of November. In round numbers the votes cast were as follows: For Mr. Hewitt 90,000, for Henry George 68,000, and for Mr. Roosevelt 60,000.

There were many reports that Henry George won the election but was counted out, and that numbers of voters were bought by the Tammany people. Be this as it may, the main interest lies in the question, who, of what social position, were those sixty-eight thousand voters who stood for the labor candidate in the election? There is no doubt that the vast majority of them were members of labor organizations, wage earners, and that a comparatively small number were men of liberal profession and a yet smaller number were radical merchants and manufacturers. It was really a political movement of organized labor—a class movement in its nature, helped along by a small number of outside sympathizers.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 88.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 120.

Although the campaign did not end in formal victory, the unexpectedly large labor vote created enthusiasm, confidence in the united and organized efforts by labor and bright hope for the future. It was a remarkable and even a unique campaign in the history of American politics. In a short period of time, without money, press influence, and proper political organization, to unite diverse elements, diverse not only as regards occupation, nationality, culture and language, but also philosophies and political belief, and nearly to defeat, in a clean and honest way, both rich and powerful old parties headed by trained politicians—was not such a campaign record-making? And truly previous to the campaign of 1886 and after it, till our time, there has not been in American municipal elections such a political campaign undertaken by organized labor, united into one body and one effort, except, it may be, the more recent Milwaukee and Los Angeles campaigns where labor fought under the leadership of the Socialists.

The success of the campaign in 1886 is explained by the existing industrial, political and legal conditions—by the crying need that labor should better oppressive conditions, by the unifying educational work done by the Central Labor Union in the previous years, and by the popular and powerful leadership of Henry George, whose non-partisan attitude created a possibility for diverse elements to unite under his leadership. A union creates feeling of solidarity, self-confidence, and a hope for success, and this psychological factor is one of prime importance in mass movements. The success of the campaign also had purely practical beneficial results. A change in the attitude of the parties in power toward the demands for better labor laws took place after the campaign. If one compares the spirit and purpose of the labor laws enacted in the previous four or five years with the spirit and purpose enacted in 1887, one finds a marked difference. While the former laws meant a “grand legal round-up” of labor, the laws of 1887 were, though vaguely, directly to protect labor. For instance, there was enacted at Albany, in 1887, a law providing for adjustment of disputes between employers and employees and authorizing the creation of Boards of Mediation and Arbitration. Besides, there was enacted in 1887 a law for tenement house regulation, a law providing for the la-

beling and marketing of convict-made goods, a perfected mechanics' lien law, a law regulating employment of women and children, a law regulating the hours of labor on street, surface and elevated railroads, and finally the notorious Penal Code was amended by a law prohibiting employers, singly or combined, to coerce employees not to join a labor organization.³⁵

Undoubtedly such a change in the attitude of the lawmakers was, at least in part, due to the impressive labor strength demonstrated in the campaign of 1886.

The leaders of the campaign derived great encouragement from its successful results, and soon after the campaign they began to build up a permanent political organization, preparing for the next national campaign.

³⁵ *Fifth Annual Report of the Bureau of Statistics of Labor of the State of New York*, 1887, pp. 736-776.

CHAPTER VII

BUILDING UP THE UNITED LABOR PARTY

CENTRAL ORGANIZATIONS

The Central Labor Union Campaign Committee met on November 4 and discussed plans for a permanent political organization of labor. It was decided to call a meeting of the district organizers on November 9, at which a date was to be set for a primary election of delegates to a county convention.

The political leaders of the campaign, closest to Henry George, called a mass meeting at Cooper Union on November 6. In the call no counsel was taken of the trades, either collectively or individually.

At this meeting was adopted a resolution prepared by Henry George and presented by Rev. John W. Kramer, in which it was proposed to name the new political organization the "Progressive Democracy," and which ran, in part, as follows:

"Since the Republican party had outlived the days of its usefulness and the Democratic party was become but a corrupt machine we hereby declare that time has come for an organization which shall be in the true sense Republican and in the true sense Democratic—of a real party of the people, of a Progressive Democracy which shall revive and carry out the principles of Thomas Jefferson We call upon the Central Labor Union to which is due the credit of taking the initiative in this great movement, to issue an address to organized workingmen of other cities, looking to cooperation by similar movements in their own localities."¹

This resolution called upon all who held the principles of the Clarendon Hall platform:

"To form themselves throughout the whole country into associations for the purpose of carrying on the work of propagating truth by means

¹ *Public*, Nov. 3, 1911, p. 1130.

of lectures, discussions, and the dissemination of literature so that the way may be prepared for political action in their various localities and for the formal organization at the proper time of a national party."²

A temporary central committee of three, consisting of John McMackin, Father Edward McGlynn, and Professor David B. Scott, was appointed to carry out the organization work. This committee chose G. Barnes, a publishing agent, as the executive secretary, in preference to Daniel De Leon, who was another candidate for that position. McMackin was the only labor representative in the Central Committee. After the first meeting, Professor Scott retired on account of ill health and James Redpath, managing editor of the *North American Review*, took his place. Barnes in the capacity of executive secretary, on his own motion, changed the name of the organization from the "Progressive Democracy" to that of the "Land and Labor Committee."³

The initiation of this meeting, the method of the call, and the character of the appointments, attracted the attention of some of the labor leaders, especially of the Socialists, who considered the meeting as the beginning of the "side-tracking" of the labor movement. The *Leader* said afterwards: "At this point began the work of side-tracking the movement from the whole issue of Labor to the one question of a single land tax."⁴ The Socialists even went so far as to explain the appointment of Barnes, a publishing agent, to the office of executive secretary by personal interests of Henry George. According to the *Leader*: "An extensive system of advertising the George books accompanied and was part of the appeals issued by the Cooper Union Committee."⁵ Apparently this was done not for the material interests of Henry George but for the sake of principles advocated in his books.

Though there was much talk about the meeting and its re-

² *The Leader*, Nov. 8, 1887, p. 3. The Central Labor Union at once issued a call to organized labor throughout the United States asking it to form political associations preliminary to the national convention of the new party.—*Standard*, Jan. 8, 1887, p. 7.

³ *Leader*, Oct. 30, 1887, p. 6.

⁴ *Leader*, Oct. 30, 1887, p. 6.

⁵ *Ibid.*

sults in labor circles, no open criticism or protest was made at that time. The people were enthusiastic and everything went on smoothly. The new central organization continued its work, especially in organizing land and labor clubs. It also worked out a constitution and by-laws, which were adopted on December 1, 1886, and which remained in force until the county convention on January 6, 1887.⁶ The Laws Committee of the Central Labor Union was recognized as the Laws Committee of the United Labor party at the same time. This committee worked out the "provisions of the Constitutional Convention and other measures of importance to the workingmen and the party of United Labor."⁷

LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS

According to the call of the Political Committee of the Central Labor Union, the district organizers met on November 9 at Central Labor Union Hall. The meeting did not favor the name of "Progressive Democracy." The motion made by Barnes to name the new organization the "Land and Labor Party" was defeated, and the name "United Labor" was adopted. At the same time it was decided to call a county convention on January 13, 1887, in which each assembly was to be represented by one delegate for each 200 votes cast on November 2, altogether 340 delegates. Meanwhile, each assembly district was to be reorganized. The call for a county convention was issued and after that the reorganization of districts and election of delegates went on energetically.

Two kinds of local organizations were formed: (1) District Associations of the United Labor Party, and (2) Land and Labor Clubs. Both considered themselves belonging to the United Labor party and in harmony with the Clarendon Hall Platform, but they differed as to their constituents and constitution. The Land and Labor Clubs were organized upon the initiative and with the help of the committee of three, elected at the Cooper Union meeting. Secretary Barnes especially agitated for those clubs. They were distinctly singletax clubs with a membership

⁶ Appendix II.

⁷ Appendix III.

composed of mixed elements under the leadership of intellectuals. On the other hand, the district associations grew up spontaneously from the temporary election organizations under the leadership of district organizers, mostly labor leaders. The majority of their constituents were wage-earners.

Thus began the separation of the political or party organization from the economic or trade organization of labor, and, furthermore, two different types of local organizations of the party appeared.

The County Convention met on January 6, 1887, in Clarendon Hall. All 340 delegates were present. McMackin was elected chairman, Frank Ferrell vice-chairman, and J. P. Archibald secretary.

The election of the committees on constitution and organization ended the work of the first session of the convention, in which participated almost all the prominent reformers and leaders representing different political beliefs and schools of thought at that time.

A report of the *Leader* described some of them in the following way:

"Honorable Gideon J. Tucker—a delegate from the 16th Assembly District; W. Lloyd, old, graybearded Greenback veteran, as a spectator from the platform, among the host of the younger crusaders in the holy war with oppression and corruption, was a sight full of inspiration; Jeremiah Murphy—the erstwhile prominent president of the freight-handlers in their palmy days; James Magie—the rising leader of the Empire Protective Association; William McCabe—the war-horse of other-day labor politics; Phil. Scandell—whose prominence and valuable services in K. of L. work a couple of years ago were still fresh in the minds of most of these there last night; Henry Emrich—the Furniture-Workers' National Secretary and one of the Central Labor Union permanent pillars; B. J. Hawkes—a trade unionist of experience of both sides of the ocean and the present trusty treasurer of the County Organization; Joseph Wilkinson—the veteran secretary of the Journeymen Tailors; George K. Lloyd—who helped to rock the Central Labor Union in its cradle; Wm. Conclin—painter, one of the solid timbers of the 15th A. D.; Wm. Wallace—chairman of the "tony" seventh, and a strong link in 49's (K. of L.) long chain; editor J. W. Sullivan—one of the best-posted men present on labor history, political economy, and social statics; S. Sanial—chairman of the 24th A. D., a veteran labor journalist; Patrick Doody—one of the best known and most sterling champions of every honest reform; Thomas Moran—the

[339]

most sagacious and finished debater of the Excelsior Labor Club; *Ch. M. Maxwell*—a respected president of the Omulet Association, touched elbows and grasped hands in last night's remarkable ensemble of fraternity.”

The second session of the county convention was held on January 13 in Clarendon Hall. The committee on permanent organization was elected as follows: John McMackin as chairman, Frank Ferrell as first vice-chairman, Henry Emrich as second vice-chairman, A. G. Johnson as first secretary, and Dr. Wm. Gottheil as second secretary. The proposal to name the new party the “Land and Labor Party” was defeated, leaving the name of the party unsettled till the next session.

The temporary central committee formed at the Cooper Union meeting remained in existence. It bore the name of Land and Labor Committee and was mainly in charge of the above-mentioned clubs. Thus were formed not only two types of local organizations, but also two parallel central committees in the same party. This duality of organization was due, first, to the conscious intention of the leaders closest to Henry George, to separate entirely the new party from labor organizations, and, second, to the existence of a non-labor element in the party. Henry George and his followers wanted to organize every “honest citizen” who accepted their principles. As the radical intellectuals and merchants and other capitalists who “worked by their heads” did not belong to organized labor, they, accepting the singletax theory, joined the clubs more readily than the ordinary district associations in which the wage-earner element prevailed. The Land and Labor Clubs, being free from class distinction and having the singletax for their main issue, were especially favored by the *Standard*. Henry George, urging their formation, said:

“In every state headquarters will be opened for the formation of Land and Labor Clubs Land and Labor Clubs are organizing about thirty a week When a sufficient number of these clubs have been organized to allow a full representation in all sections of the country, a national convention will be called The convention will choose the name of the party, will make a platform, and will decide whether to nominate or not.”

* *Leader*, Jan. 7, 1887, p. 1.

* *Standard*, Jan. 15, 1887, p. 3.

The third and last session of the county convention was held on January 20. The main business of this session was the discussion and adoption of a platform, rules and regulations for the new party. The committee on platform, through its chairman, Professor Daniel De Leon, introduced a resolution which was adopted. It reaffirmed the Clarendon Hall Platform, emphasized currency reform more emphatically, made a considerable concession to the Socialists and unionists, calling the whole economic system "perverse", depriving "the man of his birth right (land)" and robbing "the producer of a large share of the fruits of his labor."¹⁰

On the recommendation of the same resolution the name of the United Labor party was adopted. This name was not favored by Henry George and his followers, because it stamped the movement with a class characteristic. They agreed, however, to accept it temporarily. An investigation made by the New York *Volkszeitung* showed that out of the 340 delegates to the county convention, 320 were wage-earners and only 20 belonged to other industrial classes. Quoting the *Volkszeitung*, the *Standard* said: "In view of this statement the name that was adopted last week, 'The United Labor Party,' seems well chosen."¹¹

The new party organization consisted of: Election district organizations, assembly district organizations, assembly executive committee, a county general committee, and a county executive committee.

In the proposed constitution were the following clauses:

"No resident of an Election District shall be eligible to membership of the corresponding Election District Organization unless . . . he has severed all connection with all other political parties, organizations and clubs." Art. I. Sec. 2.¹²

Further is the statement—

"The County General Committee shall have the power to amend or alter this constitution subject to a general vote of the Assembly D. Organization" . . . Art. IV, Sec. 4.¹³

¹⁰ *Standard*, Jan. 22, 1887, p. 6.

¹¹ *Standard*, Jan. 22, 1887, p. 6.

¹² *Leader*, Jan. 22, 1887, p. 3, col. 2.

¹³ *Ibid.*

And still further—

"Twenty-second Ass. D. Organization shall in view of its exceptional circumstances, be authorized to create an advisory board on which the various nationalities shall be represented in proportion to the number of enrolled members in the club of each nationality" Art. VI, Sec. 2.¹⁴

Thus the permanent county organization of the United Labor party was completed. It remained only to develop it.

The process of organizing locals and educating the masses went on smoothly. Aside from New York County, local organizations of the party were formed in Kings (Brooklyn), Albany, Erie (Buffalo), and other counties in the state. Small Land and Labor Clubs, though many of them existed only on paper, appeared here and there. In the city of New York alone, fifteen such clubs were organized.¹⁵

On May 5, 1887, a call for a state convention of the United Labor party to be held at the city of Syracuse on August 17, was issued. This call was signed by the members of the committee on state convention, of the general committee, United Labor party, Kings County; of the committee on state convention of the general committee, United Labor party, New York County; and of the general committee Land and Labor. The representation was to be: Three delegates and three alternates from each assembly district, and one delegate from each Land and Labor club in districts not regularly organized. In the call, prepared mainly by Henry George, the following issues were set forth: (1) The taxation of land values; (2) Demand for currency reform in the spirit of Greenbackism; (3) Government ownership of railroads and telegraphs, the private ownership of which "while failing adequately to supply public needs, impoverishes the farmer, oppresses the manufacturer, hampers the merchants . . ."¹⁶ The call ended with a condemnation of the Democratic and Republican parties as "hopelessly and shamelessly corrupt" and affiliated with monopolies. Labor demands were entirely omitted from the call; it avoided class distinctions and appealed to all the people, except landlords and millionaires.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ *Leader*, May 6, 1887, p. 1.

¹⁶ *Leader*, May 5, 1887, p. 1.

The dissatisfaction with the general attitude of Henry George and his followers toward the movement became more intense among the Socialists. The *Leader*, describing this history of the movement afterwards said:

"The call for a state convention (Syracuse, Aug. 17, 1887) was mainly framed by Mr. George and proved to be a very skillful rhetorical evasion of the main issue between capital and labor upon which organized labor stands. The rupture grew. Mr. George for the first time took a serious interest in the party which he had captured for his plans and policy"¹⁷

The Socialists began to feel that the philosophy of the Singletaxers was not a "partial socialism" at all but something opposite, out of harmony altogether with the Socialist doctrines. Neither did the tactics of the Singletaxers appeal to the Socialists. The Singletaxers denied that there was any real conflict of interests between labor and capital, and that the movement in its nature was a class movement of labor.

There was also a practical reason why the Singletaxers opposed the Socialists, their doctrines and tactics. It was explained by Henry George in an interview with the editor of the *Leader* before the Syracuse convention. During this interview, Henry George expressed his "highest esteem for the personal character, the self-sacrifice and the honesty of purpose of the Socialists, but said, on the other hand, that in order not to frighten away the country votes, the party ought to disclaim all connections with Socialistic doctrines."¹⁸ Furthermore, Henry George complained that the Socialists were continuously attacking the singletax theory, trying to impress their own views upon the new party. Not long before the Syracuse convention the *Standard* reported Henry George as saying:

"The Socialists have been persistent in the attempt to undermine the platform of the party 'We insist,' they say, 'that the burning social question is not a land tax but the abolition of all private property in the instruments of production' Very well, then there is no place for them in the new party."¹⁹

¹⁷ *Leader*, Oct. 30, 1887, p. 6.

¹⁸ *Leader*, Aug. 17, 1887, p. 1.

¹⁹ *Standard*, Aug. 13, 1887, p. 1.

Thus arose the contest of supremacy in the political labor movement. Each of the rival schools honestly and sincerely believed in the all-curing power of its doctrines and methods and tried to capture labor by means of agitation, education, and organization. The Singletaxers, however, had two advantages. First, they already had established themselves in the movement, and second, they had a strong popular leader, which the Socialists lacked. The main advantage of the latter consisted of their compact organization and unity of action.

In the beginning of this struggle the Singletaxers were put on the defensive. It was only somewhat later that they decided to become aggressive.

The other schools in the movement had no ambition to capture it. Greenbackism was declining, while the Knights of Labor and Trade-Unionists, having their own organizations for their own ends, did not care much to enforce any definite philosophy or policy of their own upon the new political party, except that they were quite firm in the immediate labor demands. So the struggle began between the Singletaxers and the Socialists.

CAPTURE OF THE LEADER BY THE SOCIALISTS

The *Leader* was the recognized organ of the Central Labor Union and the United Labor party, being edited from its beginning and during the political campaign of the fall of 1886 in the spirit of the singletax and Henry George's policy, the membership of its editorial staff being his followers and Louis F. Post its editor-in-chief. Shortly after the fall campaign the Socialists at a general meeting of the shareholders of the *Leader* received a large majority of votes and elected Sergius E. Shevich, a Socialist and former editor of the *Volkszeitung*, to the position of editor-in-chief of the *Leader*.²⁰ This apparently sudden victory

²⁰ S. E. Shevich was a Russian nobleman employed in the diplomatic service. He became a follower of Ferdinand Lassalle in Germany, and was forced to leave not only his diplomatic position but his native country. At the end of the seventies he migrated to the United States and began to take active part in the Socialist movement. He was a well-read man, spoke several languages and possessed oratorical abilities. He was one of those who were instrumental in bringing about, in the middle eighties, a change in the tactics of the Socialist Labor party—from independent political action to educational methods.

of the Socialists may be explained, first, by the fact that the *Leader* was supported chiefly by the radical, especially German element, and, second, the Socialists and their sympathizers had foresightedly distributed their shares more extensively among themselves, which meant more votes in their favor at the general meetings of the company, for the voting was exercised upon the principle of one man, one vote, irrespective of the number of shares held. The total number of the shares was 900. Out of this amount only 300²¹ shares were owned by the Socialists. The majority of the remaining 600 shares were owned by the Central Labor Union and other individual unions. A considerable number of shares belonged also to the Greenbackers, the Singletaxers, and individuals not affiliated with any specific organization or school of thought.

At first the new editor did not attack the singletax theory directly. Indirectly, however, he criticized it, emphasizing the labor side of the movement and publishing articles on class conflict which were out of harmony with the singletax theory.

At the general meeting of the shareholders of the *Leader* Company on March 5, 1887, S. E. Shevich was reëlected and John McMackin and James P. Archibald were respectively chosen chairman and treasurer of the company for the next year.²²

When the conflict between the Singletaxers and the Socialists in the locals of the party became acute, the *Leader* took open stand against the theory and tactics of the Singletaxers. On June 23, the *Leader* commented editorially on the question of the future policies to be followed by the United Labor party: Restoration of land to the people, just remuneration of the toilers for their labor, the shortening of the hours of labor, the public ownership of the means of transportation and communication were advocated. The *Leader* stated also that there existed a conflict between capital and labor, taking both in the sense of industrial classes and calling those "fools" and "knaves" who denied the existence of the conflict.²³ The editorial of the next day stated "that the 'theory' known as the 'Henry George's' had

²¹ *New York World*, Sept. 8, 1887, p. 2.

²² *Standard*, March 12, 1887, p. 3.

²³ *Leader*, June 23, 1887, p. 2.

been promulgated by John Stuart Mill."²⁴ Then followed a quotation from the chapter on taxation in Mill's *Elements of Political Economy*, in which Mill advocates the taxation of "unearned appendage." Criticizing Mill, the editorial concluded: "We suggest to the boodle press that before attacking Henry George it would be well to pulverize John Stuart Mill."²⁵ In another editorial the *Leader* criticized the Physiocrats and showed that they had arrived at the same conclusion that Henry George reached afterwards.²⁶ In consequence of this attack upon the singletax theory by the *Leader*, McMackin, chairman of the Leader Company resigned in the beginning of August.²⁷ Thus even the business management of the *Leader* went into the hands of the Socialists. Their control over the party's organ was now complete.

THE STANDARD

Almost as an answer to the capture of the *Leader* by the Socialists came, at the end of November, 1886, the announcement by Henry George of his intention to start a weekly paper of his own under the title of the *Standard*, the first copy of which actually appeared on January 8, 1887. Its editorial staff was as follows: Henry George, proprietor and editor-in-chief; William T. Croasdale, managing editor; Louis F. Post, editorial and special writer; Rev. John W. Kramer; J. W. Sullivan, labor editor; W. B. Scott; and Henry George, Jr.

In his introductory statement Henry George said that he hoped to make this paper the worthy exponent and advocate of a great party yet unnamed that was to be formed.²⁸ The paper was carefully edited. Much space in it was given to the controversy with the Catholic Church, to the McGlynn case, to the explanation of the singletax theory, and to the agitation in favor of the United Labor party.

Thus each side had its own organ: The Socialists had the

²⁴ *Leader*, June 24, 1887, p. 2.

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ *Leader*, July 14, 1887, p. 2.

²⁷ *Standard*, Aug. 13, 1887, p. 1.

²⁸ *Standard*, Jan. 8, 1887, p. 1.

Leader, and the Singletaxers the *Standard*, both papers being the organs of the party.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CONFLICT WITH THE AUTHORITIES OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

The success of the political campaign of organized labor, headed by Henry George opposing the private ownership in land values, greatly alarmed the authorities of the Catholic church. Archbishop Corrigan issued a pastoral letter which was read in the Catholic churches and published in the newspapers on Nov. 21, 1886. It was mainly directed against the political uprising of labor, and against the singletax doctrines, although this was not openly stated in the letter. The archbishop defended private property in land as being in accordance with God's laws and economic necessities. For the benefit of the poor he advocated charity and recalled that Christ proclaimed "the poor blessed," and bade "them hope for the reward of eternal happiness . . . Now, who does not see that this is the best way of settling the struggle of long standing between the poor and the rich."²⁹

A criticism of this letter was made by Fr. McGlynn in an interview with a reporter of the *New York Tribune*. For this criticism the archbishop suspended McGlynn for the remainder of the year and sent a letter to the Cardinal Prefect of the Propaganda, laying the case before him. Soon after, McGlynn was ordered to proceed to Rome. However, he refused to obey this order on account of ill health (he had heart trouble) reaffirming his adherence to the singletax doctrines: "I would bring about instantly, if I could, such change of laws all the world over as would confiscate private property in land, without one penny of compensation to the miscalled owners."³⁰ As an answer to this, the archbishop suspended McGlynn until such time as the highest authority of the Catholic Church should act.

On September 29, 1886, Henry George made a personal visit to the archbishop to vindicate McGlynn, having an introductory

²⁹ *George-Hewitt Campaign*, Louis F. Post and Fred C. Leubuscher, New York, 1886, 139.

³⁰ *Standard*, Feb. 5, 1887.

letter from the latter in which he said: "It seems to me a providential occurrence for which we should be thankful, that the labor organizations have chosen for their leader so wise and conservative a man, and one so utterly opposed, as all his writings show, to Socialism, communism and anarchy, as Mr. George is."³¹

The visit was a short and a most formal one. It did not accomplish its purpose. On the next day Henry George wrote a private letter to the bishop in which he stated that the hostility of the church authorities "could but give point to the assertions of those who are striving to alienate workingmen from the church, by declaring that its authorities have always exerted their power against any attempt to emancipate labor."³²

In answer to the pastoral letter of the archbishop of November 21, 1886, Henry George published an open letter on December 7, 1886, in which he stated that the pastoral letter places the Catholic Church "in the attitude of a champion of private property in land."³³ Then he defended his singletax theory on the same grounds on which the archbishop attacked it, that is, God's law and natural laws.

When McGlynn was ordered to Rome, Henry George published a strong article in the first issue of the *Standard* in which he vigorously attacked the actions of the Catholic Church.³⁴ This article created a sensation and two extra editions of the *Standard*, in all 75,000 copies, were issued. From now on Henry George gave a large space in the *Standard* to the conflict with the Catholic Church, which grew to international importance. In the next issue of the *Standard* he wrote:

"It is notorious that in New York the Catholic church has a long series of years been more or less allied with Tammany, and that this influence, for which a *quid pro quo* has been paid by grants of public property and lavish appropriations of public money And this is significant, that Archbishop Corrigan had no objections to Dr. McGlynn making any number of speeches for a candidate by Tammany."³⁵

³¹ *Standard*, Jan. 8, 1887, p. 1.

³² *Ibid.*

³³ *George-Hewitt Campaign*, 140.

³⁴ *Standard*, Jan. 8, 1887, p. 1.

³⁵ *Standard*, Jan. 15, 1887, p. 1. McGlynn made speeches in behalf of the candidacy of Cleveland, 1882; no objections to his speeches were made by the church authorities.

The newspapers of the old parties approved of the archbishop's action when he, in the middle of January, removed McGlynn from his pastorate. Even many Protestant Church authorities, actually in conflict with those of the Catholic Church, took the side of the latter in the conflict.

At the beginning of May, Cardinal Simeoni summoned McGlynn to Rome, giving him forty days to go, under pain of excommunication. As McGlynn could not obey this order, he was excommunicated from the Catholic Church by Archbishop Corrigan on July 3, 1887.

ANTI-POVERTY SOCIETY

At the end of March, McGlynn addressed a very large audience, composed mainly of Catholics and his former parishioners, in the Academy of Music, on the theme of "The Cross of the New Crusade" against poverty. This address was repeated by him at various times and places, even outside of New York. At the end of April he addressed the Brooklyn people. Describing this meeting, Henry George wrote: "On last Wednesday it was Brooklyn's turn to do honor to Rev. McGlynn. A big audience collected in the Academy of Music to hear the famous divine deliver his lecture on The Cross of the New Crusade . . ."³⁸

The beginning of these lectures of McGlynn coincided with the creation of an organization known as the Anti-Poverty Society, the idea of which was originated by Thomas McCreedy of the *Standard* staff. A militant society to fight poverty, to arouse the New York slums in the tenement sections by educating the masses to the idea of the singletax, was to be formed.

On March 26, 1887, a small meeting took place in the office of the *Standard* at which the first organization under the name of the Anti-Poverty Society suggested by McCreedy was called into life. McGlynn was appointed president; Henry George, vice president; Benjamin Urner, a merchant, treasurer; and M. Clark, a member of the editorial staff of the *Irish World*, secretary.

The first formal meeting of the new society was called on May 1 in Chickering Hall. The attendance at this meeting was so

³⁸ *Standard*, Apr. 30, 1887, p. 1.

large that many people had to be turned away. The chief speakers were McGlynn and Henry George. The latter said in part :

"The simple words, 'Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done *on earth as it is in heaven*,' as they fell from the lips of a Christian priest who proclaims the common fatherhood of God and the common brotherhood of man . . . have in them the power with which Christianity conquered the world"³⁷

The enrollment of the members for the new society was large. Women and men of various religious denominations and walks of life joined the society. Everyone signed a card on which the object of the society was printed and paid an entrance fee of one dollar. Most of the Socialists kept away from the society on account of its religious spirit. A considerable number of McGlynn's former parishioners, mostly Irish wage-earners, joined the Anti-Poverty Society, which served as a good propaganda organization for the singletax theory among the masses and thereby helped along the general movement.

THE CONFLICT OVER THE TERM "LABOR" IN THE PARTY'S NAME

Although the county convention adopted the name of the United Labor party and Henry George and his followers half-heartedly agreed to it for the time being, they were always dissatisfied with this name and at no time, during the whole career of the party, did they succeed in getting rid of it. The *Standard* opened its pages for the discussion on the party's name. Henry George favored the name of either Free Soil or Free Land party.³⁸ He rejected the term "labor," because "it has narrow associations and would handicap the new party with the notion that it is merely a class movement."³⁹ At the same time the labor unionists and especially the Socialists vigorously defended the adopted name of the United Labor party and particularly the term Labor in it. The *Leader* said: "In the word 'Labor' are crystallized the noblest aspirations, the grandest and broadest ideas of our century."⁴⁰ The followers of Henry George

³⁷ *Standard*, May 7, 1887. p. 2.

³⁸ *Standard*, June 18, 1887.

³⁹ *Standard*, July 30, 1887, p. 1.

⁴⁰ *Leader*, July 30, 1887, p. 2.

suggested many different names for the party. For example: Anti-Monopolists, Nationalists, Federalists, Christian, the People's Rights, Anti-Poverty, etc.

At the end of 1887 Henry George wrote again:

"It was said over and over again during the campaigning (The state campaign of 1887) that the United Labor party is not a 'labor' party in the ordinary meaning of the term. It has no more claim on the votes of the wage-earners, than on those of the farmers or any other class of people."⁴

Henry George continued to favor the name of the Free Soil party. McGlynn favored the title of the Commonwealth party.

This outspoken opposition of the Singletaxers to the term "labor" in the party's name gave their opponents, the Socialists, a strong argument in attacking the Singletaxers for "side-tracking" the labor movement. The Singletaxers themselves hardly gained anything by it; they were not in position to shift the movement from the organized labor to that of all classes of the people as they wished and hoped.

DEVELOPMENTS IN THE CENTRAL ORGANIZATIONS

The central organizations of the party at the beginning of July, 1887, consisted of the county general committee, of which McMackin was chairman. It met at Clarendon Hall on the first Thursday of each month.

The county executive committee had a room at 28 Cooper Union and was composed of twenty-four members, one from each assembly district. John McMackin was chairman.

The election of delegates to the state convention in the assembly districts began in the month of July. Here and there appeared instructions to the delegates to defend the term "labor" in the party's name, to emphasize "labor demands" in the platform, to nominate a "straight labor ticket," etc. The Singletaxers attributed such instructions to the influence of the Socialists. To a certain degree this was true. In the middle of July rumors that the Socialists would be ousted from the United Labor party on the ground that they belonged to another political

⁴ *Standard*, Dec. 3, 1887, p. 1.

party, namely, the Socialist Labor party, began to circulate. At the same time conflicts between the Singletaxers and the Socialists in several of the assembly districts, especially in the tenth, began. The Socialists insisted that the County Executive Committee issue a ruling on the eligibility of the Socialists for membership in the United Labor party. On July 24 the Committee met and passed unanimously the following resolution:

"Resolved, that it is the sense of the County Executive Committee that membership in the Socialist Labor party does not disqualify a citizen for membership in the United Labor party."⁴²

This resolution encouraged the Socialists in their attack on the policies of the Singletaxers in the party. In the election of delegates to the state convention, they tried to push ahead their candidates and to insert their views in the instructions to the delegates. These actions of the Socialists evoked from the press of the old parties the opinion that, as in the case of the *Leader*, the Socialists were endeavoring to capture the United Labor party for their own purposes. These rumors and the energetic agitation by the Socialists in behalf of their views and philosophy led the Singletaxers to a definite decision to oust the Socialists from the United Labor party.

The County General Committee met on August 5. One of the questions to be considered was the above quoted resolution of the County Executive Committee on the eligibility of the Socialists to the United Labor party. After discussing the report of the County Executive Committee, delegate August Mayer⁴³ of the tenth assembly district rose and moved to approve the report save that part of it which contained the above resolution. This motion created much confusion. Some demanded its adoption, some wanted to reject it, but most loud were the voices of those who were calling for a ruling by the chairman. When comparative order was restored, Chairman McMackin ruled as follows: "If I am compelled to, I shall have to rule that, according to the constitution, all parties which have nominated and run candidates are political parties, and are comprehended by the letter

⁴² *Leader*, Aug. 5, 1887, p. 2; *Standard*, Aug. 13, 1887, p. 1.

⁴³ A former "walking delegate" for the American Fresco-Painters' Union.

of the section.”⁴⁴ He based his ruling on the following arguments: The Socialist party was certainly a political party; the Greenbackers had been admitted because they dismembered their party and came in as individuals—the Socialists ought to do likewise. In summing up his arguments, he concluded: “We cannot afford to tolerate Greenback, Irish, German or Socialist factions here. We must stand for American ideas as American citizens.”⁴⁵ A vote was then taken and the chair was sustained by a considerable majority. Thus the Socialists were ruled out of the United Labor party by its highest authority in existence at that time.

On the second day, the *Leader*, in an article entitled “A Fatal Mistake”, replied to the decision of the County General Committee. The arguments of the *Leader* were that the Socialist Labor party had never been a political party; that where it had nominated candidates for office, it had done so purely and solely for purposes of propaganda; that if the bare fact of nomination qualified that organization as a political party, then the Central Labor Union was also a political party, for it had repeatedly nominated candidates; that the Socialists (members of the Socialist Labor party) had been accepted by the Central Labor Union at the beginning of the political movement, in the fall campaign of 1886 and by the County Convention of the United Labor party; and that in the discussion of the constitution of the new party, it was definitely stated that the Socialist Labor party did not come under Article I, Section 2; furthermore, in a letter written by the chairman of the party, John McMackin, to August Mayer of the tenth assembly district, a fortnight before, and in the resolution of the County Executive Committee, it was expressly stated that membership in the Socialist Labor party did not disqualify a citizen for membership in the United Labor party.

The Socialists did not want to be ousted; they were quite firmly against an open split. They considered the United Labor party as an organization very favorable for the propaganda of their ideas and philosophy. Furthermore, organized labor, in

⁴⁴ *Leader*, Aug. 5, 1887, p. 2; *Standard*, Aug. 13, 1887, p. 1.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

their eyes, was in danger of being "side-tracked" by the Single-taxers. The Socialists thought that they could more effectively prevent this by staying within the party.

Thus the struggle between the two philosophical schools in the new party began almost in its cradle.

CHAPTER VIII

THE OPEN SPLIT IN THE LOCALS

DEVELOPMENTS IN THE ASSEMBLY DISTRICTS

In the local organizations of the new party the organizing process and educational work went on. Almost every district organization had its debating club, and rooms provided with books and papers, while picnics and excursions gave the members and their families opportunity for pleasure.

Henry George was quite optimistic about the future of the party. He stated that while the other parties were decaying, the United Labor party had the advantage

"of having a clear principle and a definite idea. The land question, which is another name for the labor question, has gotten so far into discussion that it will go forward now by its own momentum, gathering like a snowball."¹

What the conditions were, how the work was done, and what developments took place in the assembly districts, may be seen in the reports of the *Standard* and the *Leader* for the months of July and August, 1887. In the eighth, tenth and fourteenth assembly district organizations, an open split between the Single-taxers and the Socialists actually occurred as a result of the ruling of McMackin.

In the eighth district, Hugo Vogt was chairman. At a meeting on August 5, a delegate to the County General Committee moved that the chair of the district organization be declared vacant, as Hugo Vogt, its occupant, was a member of the Socialist Labor party. Hugo Vogt explained that the ruling of McMackin

"was directed not only against the members of the Socialist Labor party, but against Socialists in general, for the purpose of getting rid

¹*Leader*, July 2, 1887, p. 1.

of them, as many voters seemed to have a prejudice against Socialism, and in order to gain those votes it was proposed to drive the Socialists from the party."²

The motion to depose Hugo Vogt was voted down by a vote of forty-seven to five. The delegates to the County General and Executive Committees were instructed, "each and all, as a unit, to demand the reconsideration of the decision against the Socialists as unjust and calculated to destroy the party."³

When the Executive Committee of the eighth assembly district met on August 12 to transact some routine business, it found in the rooms of the organization a number of members who had been invited by postal cards to attend a "special meeting" of the organization.⁴ Chairman Hugo Vogt declared that Lavener, financial secretary of the organization, who had signed the invitation cards, had no right to call a special meeting. Lavener answered that Hugo Vogt and many others were no more members of the United Labor party, as they belonged to the Socialist Labor party. Vogt was then asked by a member to make a ruling on the right of the members of the Socialist Labor party to participate in the proceedings of the organization. The chairman ruled that they had such right. William P. Rogers appealed from the decision of the chair, but the chair was sustained by a large majority. Lavener then called upon all members, non-Socialists, to follow him to another hall. He attempted to take the records of the organization, but was prevented from doing so. The struggle for the records was followed by disorder in the room. Lavener summoned help from the nearest police station, but before the police arrived, order was restored. Lavener was again refused the records. Then Bogert with his followers, twenty-six members, retired. They assembled in another place and elected a new set of officers and delegates to the coming state convention.

Thus were elected two sets of delegates: the one consisting of the Socialists and elected by a regular meeting of the assembly district organization, before the ruling of McMackin; the

² *Leader*, Aug. 6, 1887, p. 1.

³ *Ibid.*, and the *Standard*, Aug. 13, 1887, p. 1.

⁴ *Standard*, Aug. 20, 1887, p. 3.

other consisting of the Singletaxers and elected by a "bolting" section of the organization, after the ruling of McMackin.

The organization of the tenth assembly district was rapidly extending. August M. Mayer was chairman. At a meeting on July 27, was read the resolution of the County Executive Committee declaring that membership in the Socialist Labor party did not disqualify a citizen for membership in the United Labor party. Chairman Mayer said that he would consult the County General Committee on the question, and pending a decision of that body he would retire from the chair.

On August 6 a special meeting was called by Chairman Mayer. He asked all members of the Socialist Labor party to leave the hall. Nobody moved, but loud protests were heard from every side of the hall. A member made a motion to elect another chairman, which August Mayer ignored. Another member then asked whether or not all transactions in which any member of the Socialist Labor party had taken part were unconstitutional, and therefore null and void, adding that if this were so, the constitution of the party was null and void also, as members of the Socialist Labor party had assisted in drawing it up and other members of that party had voted for it. August Mayer answered that McMackin had only decided against the illegality of the business transacted by the tenth assembly district organization at their last two meetings. Herzberg, Walter, Lange, and Shevich asked for the floor, but they were declared out of order by the chairman. Reinhard Meyer thereupon demanded that the vice-chairman should preside. Then the chairman, August Mayer, declared that if the Socialists did not leave the hall within five minutes, he and his friends would leave instead. When the five minutes were over August Mayer and his followers, eighteen in number, left the hall. Vice-Chairman Goldsmith took the chair. The places of the officers who had just left the hall were declared vacant; among them were three delegates to the County General Committee.

The vote declaring August Mayer's office vacant was unanimous, fifty-eight members voting in the affirmative. Thereupon new officers of the organization were elected. The resolution of the eighth assembly district organization protesting against McMackin's ruling was indorsed unanimously.

[357]

Meanwhile August Mayer and his friends met in Brecht's bowling alleys and, in their turn, declared vacant the seats of the officers, elected by what they termed the "Socialist Organization," including the delegates to the central organizations of the party and the delegates to the state convention. New officers and delegates to the state convention were elected.

Thus appeared in the tenth assembly district, as in the eighth, two sets of delegates. Delegates to the state convention were elected in the fourteenth assembly district. At a meeting on August 8, a communication was received from the eighth assembly district, consisting of resolutions denouncing the County General Committee. Chairman Murray ruled that the resolutions should not be read. George Block appealed from the decision of the chair. The chair was sustained by a vote of forty-two to twenty-three, and the Socialists left the room.

The next business of this meeting was the election of delegates to the state convention, as the delegates of the county general committee, before elected, were Socialists, and could not, according to the decision, be members of the party. The election of new delegates was made a special order for a meeting on August 11.⁵

The bolting Socialist faction assembled in another hall, declared that they represented the fourteenth assembly district organization of the party, and elected Francis Schaidler chairman and G. H. Koenig secretary. George Block stated that there was

"apparently a movement on foot to reduce the United Labor party to a middle class tax reform party George begins to find fault with the word "labor," and is apparently using the labor organization of this state to further his pet scheme. I should not be a bit surprised to see George and his party one of these days in coöperation with the Democratic party. The object of the Socialists is not to force any Socialist ideas on the United Labor party. What they want is to guard the working people against being defrauded and misled by any scheme entirely foreign to their interests. George fears the Socialists on that account, and for that reason he was anxious to have them excommunicated."⁶

⁵ *Standard*, Aug. 13, 1887, p. 1.

⁶ *Ibid.*

The meeting decided that the election of new delegates to the convention was illegal, as the delegates had actually and regularly been elected by the assembly district before the ruling of McMackin. At the meeting on August 11, in the presence of a number of sympathizers with the Socialists, there occurred a lively discussion on the split caused by the ruling of McMackin.

Phillip Duckfield said that the whole thing was in the interest of Henry George and his land theories. There was no labor question about the whole business.⁷

The second set of delegates to the state convention was then elected.

Thus appeared also in the fourteenth district two sets of delegates; the one consisting of the Socialists, elected regularly before the ruling of McMackin, the other elected also regularly, but after the ruling. McCabe moved that the delegates be instructed to adhere to the Clarendon Hall platform. Murphy presented a resolution that the delegates be ordered to vote for a constitution for the United Labor party that would enable Socialists to join the party. Bealing proposed to instruct the delegates to fight by "tooth and nail" every effort that might be made to change the name of the United Labor party. Shaider said that the delegates should at least adhere to the retention of the word "labor" in the party's name. All these resolutions and suggestions were adopted by the meeting.⁸

At the last meeting before the state convention, on August 15, the Socialist faction adopted a resolution declaring that their delegates, if rejected by the convention, should withdraw, together with their friends, as a protest against the action of the convention.⁹

In brief, the twenty-four assembly district organizations of the United Labor party in the city of New York differed in their attitude toward the conflict between the Singletaxers and the Socialists as follows: Ten assembly district organizations, 1, 6, 9, 12, 17, 18, 19, 20, 22, and 24, protested against the ousting of the Socialists from the United Labor party; seven, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 16 and 23, approved the ousting of the Socialists; four,

⁷ *Leader*, Aug. 12, 1887, p. 2.

⁸ *Leader*, Aug. 12, 1887, p. 2.

⁹ *Leader*, Aug. 8, 1887, p. 2.

11, 13, 15 and 21, did not express their attitude toward the conflict; three, 8, 10 and 14, had an open split between the Singletaxers and the Socialists, resulting in the election of two sets of delegates from each of those districts.¹⁰

The majority of the assembly district organizations adopted resolutions and instructions emphasizing the labor side of the movement—the difference in interests between labor and capital—defending the party's name with the term "labor" in it, and strongly favoring the Clarendon Hall Platform for the reasons that organized labor, having been united on it, had made a very successful political campaign the fall before, and that there were rumors current that Henry George and his followers were planning to leave out the labor demands from the new platform. These rumors had some visible ground in the opposition of the "George men" to the word "labor" in the party's name, and in their desire to get rid of the Socialists in the party. The assembly district organizations strongly emphasized, among other labor demands, the shortening of the working day.

Such was the situation in the assembly district organizations before the state convention.

With reference to the conflict between the Singletaxers and the Socialists, the locals, as shown above, were divided almost into equal groups: the one protesting against the ruling of McMackin and the other, slightly smaller, approving it. However, the division does not indicate that the former were in favor of Socialism and the latter in favor of the Singletax theory. Only a small number of those protesting were Socialists, consciously opposing the singletax; while the greater part of them protested solely because they did not want any split in the ranks of organized labor and did not want to lose the assistance of the energetic and active Socialists, many of whom were influential leaders in the trade unions. Among those who approved the decision of McMackin, only a small number were converted Singletaxers. Most of them sided with Henry George because he was a very popular man, under whose leadership organized labor was united and who had conducted the successful political campaign of the previous fall.

¹⁰ Appendix IV.

THE ATTITUDE OF THE CENTRAL LABOR UNION

Section 10 of the Central Labor Union met on August 9. Delegates were present from the Progressive Musical Union No. 1, the International Millwrights' and Millers' Union, and the German Coopers' Union No. 1. By a two-thirds vote a resolution was adopted in which it was stated that

"this section of the Central Labor Union regards the action of the County General Committee as a deplorable mistake, and it calls upon the organized workingmen of this city to protest against their action, and insist that the United Labor party should remain a *labor* party and maintain its labor character, as originally intended by the Central Labor Union."¹¹

The Central Labor Union itself was in a peculiar position. It was afraid to take sides in this controversy which would result in a split in its own ranks. At a meeting on August 7, delegate Edward W. Finkelstone, of the Barbers', opened his speech by referring to the fact that the previous fall the Central Labor Union decided to go into independent politics. The mere mention of the term "politics" resulted in a motion to deprive the delegate of the privileges of the floor. This motion was followed by such disorder that Delegate Finkelstone could no longer continue his speech, and the meeting had to be adjourned.¹²

At the regular weekly meeting of the Central Labor Union on August 14, the Cigarmakers' International Union No. 10 reported that their delegates were instructed to request the Central Labor Union to bring peace and harmony in the United Labor party. Food Produce Section No. 6 sent a resolution condemning the action of the United Labor party in excommunicating the Socialists. The chair ruled the resolution out of order, inasmuch as there was no request attached. An appeal from the decision of the chair was made. The chair was sustained by a vote of sixty-three against fifty-three. Somewhat later the discussion was reopened and this time the chair was sustained by a tie vote.¹³

¹¹ *Leader*, Aug. 10, 1887, p. 2.

¹² *Standard*, Aug. 13, 1887, p. 1.

¹³ *Standard*, Aug. 20, 1887, p. 3.

The great number of the trade unions, including the Central Labor Union itself, did not take sides in the political controversy between the Singletaxers and the Socialists because they did not want "to meddle with politics" and were afraid of a split in their own ranks. The trade unions which did express their attitude were divided in very nearly the same proportion and for the same reasons as the assembly district organizations of the party.

Just how many labor union organizations protested against the decision of McMackin is not known. S. E. Shevich stated, at the Syracuse convention, that there were twelve labor-union organizations, representing 17,000 workingmen, which protested. His opponent, August W. Mayer, denied this,¹⁴ stating that if there were so many protesting unions, there were the building trades unions, representing over 40,000 men, which approved the decision of McMackin.¹⁵

Considering the fact that the German branches of the building trades voted separately to protest, and that the building trades participated in the making up of the above-mentioned tie vote of the Central Labor Union, it may be safely concluded that the labor unions which definitely expressed their attitude toward the conflict were divided in the proportion before stated.

THE ATTITUDE OF THE LABOR LEADERS

In the middle of July the *Leader* published a series of interviews with the various labor leaders on political action, on the United Labor party, on its platform, and on the relations between the Singletaxers and the Socialists.

James E. Quinn, master workman of District Assembly 49, Knights of Labor, advocated unity in the labor movement. In his opinion, the shortening of hours of labor should be the first step toward the solution of the problem of the wage-system. In reference to the singletax issue, he stated that a labor party cannot be built upon one issue alone.¹⁶

Samuel Gompers, president of the Federation of Trades, said

¹⁴ *Leader*, August 18, 1887, p. 1, col. 1.

¹⁵ *Public*, Nov. 17, 1911, p. 1176.

¹⁶ *Leader*, July 25, 1887, p. 1.

that the labor movement, to succeed politically, must work for tangible results; that the ultimate end of the labor movement was the abolition of the wage-system; that George's theory of land taxation did not promise present reform, nor an ultimate solution; that the mere taxation of land values could not settle the questions between capital and labor; that the aim of capital had been to make the worker a constantly greater producer; whereas the aim of the labor movement was to make him also a greater consumer; that the most important thing of all was, firstly, the reduction of the hours of labor so that machinery might be in fact what it was in name—"labor saving;" secondly, prohibition of the employment of children under fourteen years of age; thirdly, restriction and regulation of female labor.¹⁷

Henry Emrich, secretary of the International Furniture Workers' Union, thought that the Syracuse platform ought to contain (1) nationalization of land; (2) nationalization of instruments of labor; and (3) all practical labor demands, among which the shortening of hours of labor was the "first and foremost demand." He was opposed to converting all taxes into one tax on land values. "Other capital ought also to share the burden of taxation."¹⁸

Edward Finkelstone of the Barbers' Protective Union was in favor of the governmental control of monopolies. Among the labor demands he considered the shortening of hours of labor most important because "this, for us, is the question."¹⁹

THE ATTITUDE OF THE SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

The New York section of the Socialist Labor party held a mass meeting on August 7. Henry George, McMackin, and McGlynn were invited to participate in the discussion on the relations between the Socialists and the United Labor party. They declined on the ground that the meeting was called by a political organization other than the United Labor party.

A resolution against the expulsion of the Socialists from the

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ *Leader*, July 25, 1887, p. 2.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, July 27, 1887, p. 1.

United Labor party was adopted. In support of this resolution the following arguments were set forth: The Socialists had never forced their doctrines upon the party; they had adopted its platform and would stand on it; they wanted a labor party which would be capable of knitting all the elements of organized labor together for the purpose of satisfying their immediate and practical demands as a class in the struggle against capital; the Socialist Labor party was not a political organization in the sense of the clause of the constitution of the United Labor party.²⁰ It was further stated that the leaders of the United Labor party had feared that the Socialists might stir up discontent by their criticism of Henry George's land theory, and that Henry George desired to make the middle or shop-keeping class the mainstay of his party.²¹

The National Executive Committee of the Socialist Labor party sent out an appeal to trade unions in which it stated that Henry George was pushing into the foreground his one-sided land and tax scheme, his special hobby, which "contemptuously throws aside the wage question that brought him to the front."²²

ATTITUDE OF THE LEADER

The *Leader* strongly refuted the rumors that the Socialists were trying to capture the United Labor party. It wrote in an editorial entitled "Idle Talk":

"All that talk of the 'boodles' papers about the Socialists 'capturing' this and 'sitting down' on that, about the United Labor party being 'tied hand and foot,' and the 'George men' being 'nowhere'—all because a few men known as Socialists were in some Assembly Districts elected by a majority of voters as delegates to the Syracuse Convention—is as malicious as it is ludicrous It is but natural that in voting for delegates to the Syracuse Convention they should select men holding the same views as they do on social economic questions. But these men have not the slightest intention of 'capturing' anything or 'sitting down' on anybody."²³

²⁰ In the preamble of the party it was stated that it was "chiefly a propagandist party." *Leader*, Aug. 12, 1887, p. 2.

²¹ *Standard*, Aug. 13, 1887, p. 1.

²² *Standard*, Aug. 13, 1887, p. 1.

²³ *Leader*, July 28, 1887, p. 2.

In another editorial entitled "What is behind it" the *Leader* blamed the press of the old parties for trying to split the United Labor party by attacking the Socialists, "resisting every effort that has been and still is being made to warp the political movement of Labor into a channel in which the very name and spirit of Labor will be regarded as too 'narrow.'"²⁴

The *Leader*, being opposed to an open split in the United Labor party, proposed the following compromise:

1. Declaration by the Socialist Labor party, as it has already done in a resolution adopted last Saturday at a meeting of the New York section, that it is not a political party as against a *bona fide* labor party.
2. Reconsideration of the McMackin decision.
3. Investigation of the election of delegates in the districts where election is contested.²⁵

THE ATTITUDE OF HENRY GEORGE

After the ruling of McMackin, Henry George and his followers had taken a decided stand against the Socialists in the United Labor party. To quote Henry George:

"The platform to be adopted by the United Labor party convention at Syracuse should firmly and clearly define the position of the party with relation to Socialism. This is rendered necessary by the organized endeavor of the State or German Socialists to impress their peculiar views upon the party—an endeavor that has become so notorious that any disposition to evade the issue, whether or not the United Labor party indorse these views, would give its enemies a specious pretext to make the charge that it does."²⁶

McGlynn had similar views upon the conflict.

LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS IN OTHER COUNTIES

Kings (Brooklyn) County organizations of the new party began their actual preparations for the state convention at Syracuse on July 18. Meetings at which the delegates to the County Convention were elected, took place on the evening of that day

²⁴ *Leader*, Aug. 8, 1887, p. 2.

²⁵ *The Leader*, Aug. 10, 1887, p. 2.

²⁶ *The Leader*, Aug. 4, 1887, p. 1.

all over the city of Brooklyn.²⁷ The County Convention was held on July 21.

Almost all of the assembly district organizations in Brooklyn emphasized in their resolutions the labor side of the movement and demanded the adoption of the Clarendon Hall Platform as the "only platform which contained a sufficient definition of the strained relations between labor and capital,"²⁸ and on which "United Labor could stand."²⁹ The 29th Ward did not consider the Socialist Labor party "to be a political body, but only an organization of propaganda."³⁰

The Kings County elected thirty-six delegates and as many alternates—three delegates from each assembly district.

The organizations of the United Labor party in the other counties of the state were not very strong; some existed on paper only. Besides the regular organizations there appeared quite a number of the Land and Labor Clubs. The other counties elected thirty-five delegates and twenty-five alternates all told, to the state convention at Syracuse.

This was the condition of the United Labor party in the state of New York before the state convention at Syracuse on August 17, 1887, the preparations for which resulted in an open split between the Singletaxers and the Socialists. This split, in turn, led to a cleavage in the ranks of the party—the members of organized labor.

²⁷ *The Leader*, July 19, 1887, p. 2.

²⁸ *Leader*, Aug. 4, 1887, p. 2.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, Aug. 5, 1887, p. 2.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, Aug. 10, 1887, p. 2.

CHAPTER IX

THE SYRACUSE CONVENTION AND THE STATE
CAMPAIGN OF 1887

THE CONVENTION

The state convention of the United Labor party met in Alhambra Hall, Syracuse, on August 17, 1887. About 180 delegates were furnished with admission tickets, issued by the joint committee on state conventions. Thirty-four newspaper reporters were present. Some of the big New York dailies had each sent several men.

The first test of the numerical strength of the two opposing factions came in the election of a temporary chairman. The nomination of Dr. W. C. Wood, a physician of Cloversville, was agreed upon by the Singletaxers; later they changed the candidacy of Wood to that of Louis F. Post, on account of his chairmanship experience. The Socialists and their sympathizers selected Frank Ferrell, a prominent labor leader, as their candidate. Several other nominations were made, but all candidates proposed, save Ferrell and Post, declined. Short speeches were made in favor of these two candidates; the nomination of Post was seconded by Fr. McGlynn and supported in a short speech by Henry George. The vote taken by secret ballot resulted in the election of Post by ninety-one votes as against sixty-nine for Ferrell. Later the election of Post was made unanimous. Alvin T. Walsh and Thomas Devine were elected as secretaries. Two committees, one on credentials and the other on permanent organization, were elected by congressional districts—one member for each committee from each district. Twenty-seven members were elected to the committee on credentials, and the same number to the committee on permanent organizations. This ended the first day's work of the convention.

The first business of the second session of the convention, on August 18, consisted of the consideration of the reports of the committee on credentials. With reference to the contested delegates, the committee was divided. The majority, fifteen members, reported against the admission of the Socialist delegates "who still held their connection with the Socialist Labor party, on the ground that the decision of the highest executive authority was binding."¹

The minority report, signed by eight members, favored the admission of the Socialist delegates on the ground that the five ousted delegates were regularly elected before the ruling of McMackin, and no decision involving an interpretation of the law can justly be retroactive in its effect; that it had not been ascertained who were and who were not members of the Socialist Labor party; that the Socialist Labor party was not a political party in the sense of the clause in the constitution of the United Labor party; and that it was so understood and expressed by all party organizations and authorities, including McMackin himself until his ruling. In regard to George Block, the minority report stated that he was not a member of the Socialist Labor party. The majority report denied him the right to be a delegate solely on the ground that the members of the Socialist Labor party voted for him. If the mere voting for Block by the members of that party should disqualify him, then all the previous proceedings of the party, including even the election of McMackin to the chairmanship, ought to be declared null and void, because the members of the Socialist Labor party participated in every proceeding and election previous to the ruling of McMackin.

The reading of the reports was followed by a lively discussion. Professor W. B. Clarke said that it was high time "to take the bull by the horns." He quoted the following plank of the platform of the Socialist Labor party as adopted at Cincinnati in 1885: "That the land and the instruments of production, machines, factories, etc., and the products of labor, become the common property of the whole people." He then read the eighth political demand of the same platform that "divorce to be

¹ *Leader*, Aug. 18, 1887, p. 1.

granted on mutual consent upon providing for the care of children."

He condemned both, the plank and the demand, as not only absurd but immoral; and emphatically concluded that he could never stand upon the same platform with the men who upheld such views.

Richard J. Hinton spoke on behalf of the Socialists. Five minutes was then given to each contested delegate to defend his credentials. George Block thought that "the whole feeling against the Socialists in New York was engendered by the soreness of Henry George's friends from the successful assailment by Socialists upon George's theories,"² that the cry against Socialism was not raised until a few of Henry George's men had been defeated in the election for delegates in New York, and that the tax scheme of Henry George could not be carried out, because the taxes would always be shifted upon the shoulders of labor. He concluded with the comparison of the expulsion of the Socialists with the excommunication of Father McGlynn by "another pope."³

Hugo Vogt remarked that hitherto no labor organization had rejected him because he was a Socialist. He asked: "Was the labor movement to be wrapped up in one person—Henry George—and no one else?" He then expressed his hope that the listeners would not share the delusion that "if they put out the hated Socialists they would gain more votes."

S. E. Shevich, having been granted the periods of two other delegates, had at his disposal fifteen minutes. He spoke in part as follows:

"I tell you that by doing what you are about to do you are ruining your party In the course of time the great movement of wage-workers will again evolve and take the upper hand, but for the present your party will go into pieces There were Socialist writers who criticised Henry George's theories, but the very life of a great idea is discussion and criticism."

William McCabe of the other faction explained that he was regularly elected. August Mayer gave the same explanation,

² *Leader*, Aug. 18, 1887, p. 1.

³ *Standard*, Aug. 27, 1887, p. 6.

considering the election of the Socialists illegal. He believed that they had not initiated the political movement of organized labor in the eighties; that they had come in only five years afterwards, in 1886. In conclusion he said, "First organize your men and then educate them; and when educated, if they want a more radical platform they will make it themselves."⁴

When the contested delegates had finished their speeches, Thaddeus B. Wakeman (impartial) proposed a compromise resolution that the convention should admit both of the delegations from the contested districts and give a half vote to each delegate. In support of his resolution he stated that the ruling of McMackin was really an *ex post facto* law. Thereafter a short adjournment was taken. When the convention was again called to order, Henry George took the floor and expressed the hope that Wakeman's resolution would be voted down, because it was unjust, a compromise that settled nothing; and that he stood by the decision of the County General Committee. He said in part:

"The greatest danger that could befall this party would not be the separation of its elements—but would be a continuance within its ranks of incongruous elements."

He believed that the Socialists were not going the same way as he; that they wanted to nationalize the land and all instruments of production, to which he could not agree. He concluded: "This is the question we must settle. We cannot compromise."⁵ Fr. McGlynn also opposed the Wakeman resolution.

In closing the discussion the chair ruled that the vote on the Wakeman resolution would decide the whole subject matter of the contests. The vote resulted in the rejection of George Block by a vote of ninety-one to eighty-six, and of Vogt, Stein, Bergman, Shevich, and Boehm by a vote of ninety-four to fifty-four.⁶

This vote was the second test of the numerical strength of the struggling factions. If one does not count the votes of the non-labor element, especially those of the representatives of Land

⁴ *New York World*, Aug. 19, 1887, p. 2.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ *Ibid.* Two more Socialists, Walter Vrooman and Lawrence Gronlund, were excluded as nonresidents of the state of New York.

and Labor Clubs, the labor vote was again divided almost equally, apparently for the same reasons as in the locals of the party and in the trade unions in New York. Even if the Singletax faction did have a slight majority of the labor votes, it was due only to the direct personal influence of Henry George and McGlynn, who opposed Socialism and the Socialists all along the line.

After having disposed of the question of the contested seats, the convention took up the report of the committee on permanent organization. Two candidates were proposed for permanent chairmanship—John McMackin, and John R. O'Donnell, a former president of the Typographical Union.

When the voting on the candidates was called, two delegates from the twelfth assembly district announced that they withdrew from the convention because the Socialists were thrown out. Two delegates from the twenty-fourth assembly district of New York followed suit. The vote resulted in the election of McMackin by 111 votes as against 58 cast for O'Donnell.

The committee on platform was likewise divided. The majority, including Henry George, reported a platform prepared by the latter. Naturally, it made the Singletax the main issue of the party. It repudiated any connection with the Socialist doctrines in the following negative form:

"We do not aim at securing any forced equality in the distribution of wealth We do not propose that the state shall attempt to control production, conduct distribution, or in any wise interfere with the freedom of the individual to use his labor or capital in any way that may seem proper to him and will not interfere with the equal rights of others. Nor do we propose that the state shall take possession of land and either work it or rent it out. What we propose is not the disturbing of any man in his holding or title, but, by abolishing all taxes on industry or its products, to leave to the producer the full fruits of his exertion, and by the taxation of land values to devote to the common use and benefit those values This increased taxation of land according to its value must, while relieving the working farmer and small homestead-owner of the undue burdens make it unprofitable to hold land for speculation."

¹ *Standard*, Aug. 27, 1887, p. 2.

The last clause was directed to affect the farmers' vote. In the second half of the platform were included demands for the municipal ownership of public utility enterprises, for currency reform and for simplifying government and courts, as well as labor demands stated in general and loose terms; in short, all such issues as Henry George characterized as "insignificant,"⁸ when compared with that of the singletax.

The majority platform was adopted. The minority report was quickly voted down. Besides the singletax issue it called greater attention to the corruption in administration and courts and contained a demand for woman suffrage, and for proportional representation.

The committee on resolutions and several individual delegates proposed a series of resolutions. One proposed that the State Committee in cooperation with the Central Committee of Land and Labor call a national conference of the party. Another demanded woman suffrage. A third expressed the heartiest sympathy for the Irish people in their struggle for a national legislature. A fourth wanted a better regulation of civil service. All these resolutions were adopted. But the flow of resolutions continued. One denounced the Democratic party. Another criticized Congress for not passing an eight-hour bill for letter carriers. A third demanded a check upon the use of the Pinkerton men. A fourth wanted the prohibition of child-labor under sixteen years of age. The flow of resolutions containing such practical labor demands would have continued longer if it had not been for the opposition of Henry George, who criticized the proposed resolutions in a short speech in which he exclaimed: "It seems to me we are adopting two platforms."⁹

The state ticket for the coming fall campaign was made up as follows: For secretary of state, Henry George of New York;¹⁰

⁸ *New York World*, Aug. 18, 1887, p. 2.

⁹ *New York World*, Aug. 20, 1887, p. 2.

¹⁰ Henry George at first refused to accept the nomination on purely personal grounds. Crossdale supported his refusal on the ground that the office of secretary of state was not of sufficient importance to put at stake the prestige gained by Henry George in the fall campaign of 1886. But when McMackin, Barnes, and especially Father McGlynn appealed to Henry George, in a stormy ovation of the convention, to rise to the duty toward the party, he accepted the nomination.

for state comptroller, V. A. Wilder of Kings (Brooklyn) County, treasurer of the New York Railway Supply Company, 42 Wall Street; for state treasurer, Patrick H. Cummins of Montgomery, a boot and shoe dealer in Amsterdam, N. Y.; for attorney-general, Denis C. Feeley of Monroe, a lawyer and politician, who agitated for Blaine in 1884; for state surveyor, Sylvanus H. Sweet of Westchester, a farm owner in Broome County.

Not one wage-earner was among the nominees. Before the adjournment of the convention, a delegate expressed his doubt whether the Socialists had been really excluded. A specific motion was then carried approving the ruling of McMackin. This ended the convention.

A reporter of the New York World interviewed some prominent members of both factions on the results of the convention.

Henry George said to him:

"We will lose their (the Socialists') votes but that loss will be more than neutralized by the gain in our ranks of American workmen."¹¹

Alexander Jonas, a prominent Socialist, said:

"So George wants to catch the farmers' vote, does he? Does not he know that 40,000 farmers out in Ohio could not pay their taxes last year and were sold out by the sheriff? George cannot hoodwink the farmers. They can never understand his theories."¹²

The ousting of the Socialists from the United Labor party and the repudiation of Socialism in the new platform of the party were the most important features of the convention.

Now one may ask, Why were the Socialists ousted from the United Labor party? What were the real causes for such action? Which faction was to be blamed for the split?

One can hardly get a correct answer from the Singletaxers or the Socialists who were active at that time. Each faction considered itself right and the other wrong. Even some of the recent writers on that subject still put the whole responsibility for the split either on the Singletaxers or on the Socialists alone. The main argument in the former case is usually this. The Singletaxers had captured the political labor movement represented

¹¹ *New York World*, Aug. 19, 1887, p. 2.

¹² *Ibid.*

in the United Labor party for their own ends; the Socialists wanted to save the movement, or at least its labor class distinctiveness, and were for this expelled; the Singletaxers were the guilty party. In the latter case a similar argument, though opposite in its bearing, is made: The Socialists wanted to capture the United Labor party for their own purposes, and, to save it, they were expelled; the responsibility for the split is, therefore, to be charged to them.

The historical analysis of the movement which can be made by studying the proceedings, resolutions and platforms of the meetings and conventions, the speeches of the leaders, the reports of the press, and so forth, show the chain of events previous to the split in the following light: There was an economic labor movement united in the Central Labor Union, irrespective of the philosophies, religious beliefs, political views, and nationality of its constituents. Out of this united economic movement a united political movement grew, not for the sake of furthering any theories or philosophies, but purely for the object of satisfying existing needs. Organized labor wanted to secure, through control of the government, better laws, courts, police, and many other betterments in labor conditions. For such independent political action it needed a strong popular representative. It so happened that Henry George was at hand. He was a popular writer and public speaker, a champion of the cause of the poor. His theory and reform scheme were based on the land problem, which had become important to the American masses. Furthermore, being an advocate of the cause of the Irish people in their struggle against landlordism in Ireland, he was very welcome to the Irish element in the movement. For these reasons, having been introduced by his friends, he was accepted by organized labor. The latter really did not care much for his singletax theory as such. But, nevertheless, Henry George brought it with him into the movement and tried to make it the main issue. As time went on, there appeared a small number of his converts—very small as compared with the number of organized labor. This singletax faction headed by Henry George found itself in control of the political movement of labor.

But in the same party existed another school or faction, the Socialists, inherited from the Central Labor Union. This fac-

tion, equally firm in its doctrines, believed that the Singletaxers, whose theory they considered incorrect, were trying to sidetrack the labor movement. This the Socialists sought to prevent through control of the movement. Hence the struggle between these two factions, which led to the split and expulsion of the Socialists from the United Labor party. It is hardly correct to put the whole responsibility for this split on either of the opposing factions alone, if there be any responsibility at all. Henry George, his social philosophy and reform scheme, were a product partly of the previous philosophical doctrines and teachings of political economy, especially of those of the classical school, and partly of American conditions. The Socialists and their doctrines were a product of industrial society in general, and of the peculiarities of European conditions in particular.

We cannot reproach the factions for having theories, for they are necessary in starting new movements. Nor can we blame the factions for fighting each other. Schools of thought ought to compete with each other, for this is the only way in which it can be determined which of them is better suited to the existing conditions; in other words, which has the greatest vital power and, therefore, the right to exist.

It may be said that the Socialists understood the labor movement, its meaning, and nature much better than did the Singletaxers. But what the Socialists failed in was this, that their philosophy, emphasizing as it did the social side of human life, was not acceptable to the majority of the American wage-earners, who, though wage-conscious and organized as a separate class, still were not yet class-conscious—wage-earners among whom the individualistic spirit and a desire to become independent small producers prevailed.

To return to the details of the conflict. It is necessary to note that although only a few of the influential leaders of the Socialists were ousted from the United Labor party, the remaining having withdrawn voluntarily, the decision of the convention was categorical and a matter of principle. Every Socialist who had the smallest connection with the Socialist Labor party was liable to expulsion afterwards. The Socialists were not willing to go as far as disbanding the Socialist Labor party. They understood, furthermore, that they were not expelled for being

members of another political party, but for being Socialists; for their theories and tactics which they advocated in the ranks of the United Labor party; for their attacks upon the singletax theory; for their alleged effort to capture the party; for their opposition to the desire of Henry George and his disciples to convert the United Labor party into a party of all classes. The Socialists, their actions, and even their existence in the United Labor party, were a menace to the realization of this desire of the Singletaxers. That the Socialists were expelled because they were Socialists was best demonstrated by the speeches made by Henry George, McGlynn, Prof. W. B. Clarke, and Dr. W. C. Ward, at the convention, and by a plank in the new platform specifically repudiating the Socialistic doctrines.¹³

It is necessary to mention the fact that the nationality of the members of the party also played its rôle in the conflict. The majority of the Irish element lined up with the Singletax faction, the majority of the German element with the Socialist.

This division by nationalities was itself quite comprehensive. The Germans have always had a strong communal sentiment and social viewpoint upon human life, both being inherited from the centuries long gone by. Furthermore, many of them, before they came to America, were industrial wage-earners in Germany—the homeland of Marxian Socialism.

The majority of the Irish immigrants had been formerly land tenants in Ireland. They had an individualistic viewpoint and were devoted Catholics. Hence their lining up with Henry George, as a land reformer and agitator for the Irish cause in Ireland, and with McGlynn, as a Catholic priest.

In regard to the ousting of the Socialists, outside people were divided. Some sympathized with the Socialists because of a great "injustice" done to them. Some congratulated Henry George for freeing the United Labor party from "undesirable elements." The press of the old parties approved the ousting

¹³ If the Socialists instead of the Singletaxers had been in power, it might have possibly occurred that they would have ousted the latter from the United Labor party. In the previous years the Socialists had ousted the Anarchists from their ranks and at present they are trying to expell the Industrial Workers of the World from the Socialist party.

of the Socialists, but it doubted whether Henry George could succeed in "capturing the farmers."¹⁴

THE PROGRESSIVE LABOR PARTY

The blow delivered to the Socialists at the convention was keenly felt by them and their sympathizers.¹⁵ They hoped all the time that the local New York movement would be "controlled exclusively by organized labor and cut off from the state movement."¹⁶ Now that hope had gone to pieces. To decide upon a new way of action the Socialists called a mass meeting on August 22, in Cooper Union Hall. A day before this meeting the Central Labor Union met, and decided to bar politics from its sessions during the three coming months. When the question of parading for Henry George came up, the delegates were so divided that the question remained undecided.¹⁷

The Cooper Union mass meeting called by the Socialists was largely attended and very exciting. All the prominent Socialists and their followers were present. A considerable number of the adherents of Henry George had come also. At one time a hand-to-hand fight seemed imminent, but the outbreak was checked. William P. Rogers and S. E. Shevich were to be the principal speakers. Rogers declared that the ousting of the Socialists had been decided by the Central Committee of Land and Labor in room 28, Cooper Institute, before the ruling of McMackin; that the Syracuse convention had been packed by "fake" delegates from the Land and Labor Clubs—organizations which did not represent labor.¹⁸

Sergius E. Shevich stated that the Singletaxers had destroyed the name "United" by ousting a part of organized labor from the party, and had ruined the name "Labor" because they had taken "labor" out from the platform of the party, putting in its stead an expression that there was no antagonism between capital and labor—the expression which was, in the opinion of

¹⁴ *New York World*, Aug. 19, 1887, p. 4.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ *Leader*, Aug. 19, 1887, p. 1.

¹⁷ *Leader*, Aug. 22, 1887, p. 2.

¹⁸ *Leader*, Aug. 23, 1887, p. 1.

the speaker, "the greatest lie of the century." The only party that could succeed was a party representing the advanced ideas of organized labor; the various third parties which had arisen had been carried to their graves during the last few years because they were founded on "one issue." The names on the ticket nominated at the Syracuse Convention, except that of Henry George, had never been heard of by or identified with organized labor. "We are a party of struggle and war, we brand any man as a demagogue who sets up the cry of harmony between capital and labor in order to attain success."¹⁹

A resolution was read and adopted which sharply criticized the ousting of the Socialists from the United Labor party and called upon assembly district organizations opposed to the Henry George "ring" in the United Labor party to elect each three delegates to a conference on September 4, at Webster Hall. It also asked all trade and labor organizations to elect three delegates each.²⁰

S. E. Shevich, the "rattlesnake" editor of the *Leader*, as the Singletaxers called him,²¹ continued to attack the singletax theory unreservedly. In an editorial on August 25, he wrote that the Socialists held a man "stone blind" who, in the presence of costly machinery, interdependent production, and capitalistic combinations, on a gigantic scale, could not see that access to land without access to mechanical means through which land is made productive, and raw materials converted into finished products, would simply give individual workers "a free lot in the Potters' Field at the end of life spent in wage slavery;" and that the Socialists would welcome,

"as a sign of awakening, the proposition to tax land values to their full extent. But to tax land is one theory; to tax nothing but land is quite another theory. To the first the Socialists do not object; to the second they object emphatically."²²

The *Leader* began to publish a series of interviews with prominent labor leaders sympathizing with the Socialists. George McKay of the Knights of Labor said that he would not vote for

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ Appendix V.

²¹ *Leader*, Sept. 2, 1887, p. 1.

²² *Leader*, Aug. 25, 1887, p. 2.

Henry George because he "disunited organized labor, watered his platform throwing labor out."²³

W. P. Rogers thought that the wage-earners

"knew little and cared less for his—Henry George's—pet idea and scheme of land taxation He got so large a vote that scores of self-seeking lawyers, doctors, political heelers and other dead-beats rushed into the United Labor party The rural districts were organized by a charlatan—Barnes—into so-called Land and Labor Clubs."

The leader of the British Marxian socialists, H. M. Hyndman, published a letter on Henry George, in which he criticized the singletax theory and the ousting of the Socialists from the United Labor party. He stated that Henry George did not understand the operation of modern capitalism at all, that he did not comprehend why mere confiscation of competitive rents would not benefit workers as a class—as if Engels, Toynbee and others had not pointed out his errors over and over again. In conclusion Hyndman said that the attacks of Henry George upon the Socialists could only benefit them.²⁴

Friedrich Engels wrote from London on September 15, 1887, in a letter to Mrs. Wischnewetzky, in part as follows:

"The repudiation of the Socialists by George is in my opinion an unmerited piece of good luck which will redeem to a great extent the—unavoidable—blunder of placing George at the head of a movement he did not even understand. George as a standard bearer of the whole working class movement was a duper; George as the chief of the Georgites will soon be a thing of the past, the leader of a sect, like the thousands of sects in America."²⁵

Henry George attacked and criticized Socialism and the Socialists in his *Standard* in his own fashion. He found that German Socialism was confused and illogical in its methods. He refuted the term scientific for Socialism, because it did not look for natural laws. But the main points in his criticism were that the Socialists confused land with capital and ignored the individualistic side of human nature. He wanted to substitute the

²³ *Leader*, Aug. 31, 1887, p. 1.

²⁴ *Leader*, Aug. 31, 1887, p. 1.

²⁵ *Briefe und Auszüge aus Briefen von Joh. Phil. Becker etc. an F. A. Sorge*, Stuttgart, 1906, p. 277.

singletax for Socialism. "Make land free of access to labor and all else becomes possible,"²⁶ was his firm belief.

In morals, especially concerning honesty and sincerity, each side gave credit to the other. The Socialists stated on many occasions that Henry George and Edward McGlynn were honest and sincere men, though "stoneblind," "fanatics," and "hobby-riders."

At a meeting of the Anti-Poverty Society, on Aug. 28, Father McGlynn said, "The Socialists are frank and honest and brave. They tell us their ideas and can scarcely conceal their contempt for the present plan for society."²⁷ Then he went on to criticize Socialism for ignoring the individualism in which he believed.

The assembly district organizations of the United Labor party were now confronted by a dilemma. The majority of them did not want a split in the party. But as the split had taken place there remained for them only to reckon with the inevitable. All the assembly district organizations, except the 8th, 10th, 14th, 20th, and 24th, the majority of the members of which went Socialist, indorsed the platform and the ticket of the Syracuse convention. Some organizations did it quite readily, some half-heartedly. A general fall of enthusiasm for politics was marked almost everywhere. In the Socialist districts new organizations, some of which had originated before the convention, were started. The Socialists changed the name of the assembly district organizations of the United Labor party to that of "Labor League." From all assembly district organizations which endorsed the Singletax platform and ticket, the Socialists withdrew, organizing parallel local organizations. The same was done in Brooklyn.

The Webster Hall Conference called by the Socialists met on September 4. Seventy-eight labor organizations, fifty-six trade, and twenty-two political bodies, had sent delegates, three from each.²⁸ In his opening speech Edward Ring said: "We have learned in the Central Labor Union to understand that we have to work together as industrial organizations. We have not learned yet to cooperate in political union as well."²⁹

²⁶ *Standard*, Aug. 6, 1887, p. 4.

²⁷ *Loc. cit.*

²⁸ *Sun*, Sept. 5, 1887, p. 1, col. 1; *Leader*, Sept. 6, and Oct. 30, 1887.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

S. E. Shevich outlined two cardinal principles for the platform: (1) That the land monopoly must go, and (2) that the wage-system must be abolished.

At the second session of the conference, on September 8, a platform for the new party under the name of the "Progressive Labor Party" was adopted. It reaffirmed in a skilful combination the platforms of the Central Labor Union and the Knights of Labor. It demanded public ownership of public utility enterprises and a currency reform, and contained a long list of immediate *labor demands* advocated by labor unions.³⁰

At the next session of the conference, on September 11, it was decided to call a state convention on September 28, in Webster Hall.

At a meeting of the Central Labor Union on September 18, the following resolution was proposed:

"Whereas, at a meeting held by the so-called Progressive Labor party, at Webster Hall, on September 8, resolutions were passed and business conducted in such a manner as to convey the impression that the said meeting had the indorsement of the Central Labor Union;

Resolved, That as this Central Labor Union had sent no delegates, we are not responsible for their conduct, and fully repudiate their action in every respect."³¹

A motion to lay the resolution on the table was lost, forty-three organizations voting in the affirmative and seventy-six organizations in the negative. A demand for a debate was won by eighty-seven organizations voting in the affirmative and seventy organizations in the negative. After an exciting discussion the resolution was adopted by fifty-five organizations voting in affirmative and fifty-four³² organizations in the negative, while about fifty organizations refused to take sides and vote.

This vote shows the attitude of the Central Labor Union toward the split in the United Labor party after the Syracuse convention. One-third of the organizations affiliated with the Central Labor Union were indifferent toward politics and the remaining two-thirds were divided, with a small majority in favor of the Singletaxers.

³⁰ Appendix VI.

³¹ *Sun*, Sept. 19, 1887, p. 1.

³² *Ibid.*

The state convention of the Progressive Labor party met on September 28. Aron Henry, delegate of the Progressive International Cigarmakers' Union No. 10, nominated John Swinton for secretary of state. The nomination was seconded, and the vote in favor of Swinton was unanimous.

John Swinton, in a letter sent to the convention, declined on account of lack of money and time, and because of ill health. But soon he appeared in person at the convention, which greeted him by a thunderous ovation. In his speech he explained more fully why he declined the nomination, and criticized Henry George.

To explain his strong opposition to Henry George it is necessary to mention the fact that Swinton published a radical weekly paper, 1883-1887, in which he strongly supported the Central Labor Union in New York and favored the idea of independent labor politics. The term "labor" he understood as including not only the wage earners, but also farmers, small producers in general, and small merchants. He did not favor any element, faction, or school of thought, especially. All labor elements ought to unite into one movement; this was his pet idea. In the political campaign of organized labor in the fall of 1886 he saw a partial realization of his idea, and supported the campaign as much as he could. Now, in the split in the ranks of the United Labor party he saw that his idea was going to pieces, and, in his opinion, Henry George was responsible for it. Hence his opposition toward the latter.

"Grand old John Swinton," as the Socialists called him, stated in an interview with a newspaper reporter, that he considered the George movement unsound

"because the theory of Henry George was not an outgrowth of the evolution of the labor movement . . . Henry George . . . has got a cure-all; he carries with him the absolute nostrum that cures not only the hiccoughs and the molly grubs, but every disease mentioned in Dunglison's Dictionary; and it alone cures, and nothing else can cure. He cannot surrender that without surrendering his identity; he cannot surrender it any more than I, as Calvinist, can surrender the theology of the Institutes . . . Dr. McGlynn is the apostle who calls Henry George the prophet."⁸³

⁸³ *Leader*, Sept. 19, 1887, p. 4.

This was the ironical statement of Swinton. Afterwards, yielding to the insistence of the state committee of the Progressive Labor party he accepted the nomination for state senator in the seventh senatorial district.³⁴

To return to the convention. The following nominations were made: J. Edward Hall, secretary and treasurer of the Machinists' District Assembly of Knights of Labor, for secretary of state; H. A. Barker, cigar-maker of Albany, for comptroller; Henry Emrich, secretary of the International Furniture Workers' Union, for state treasurer; Thaddeas B. Wakeman, a lawyer, for attorney-general.

S. E. Shevich proposed that the Progressive Labor party challenge Henry George to discuss the differences between the singletax and the socialist theories before a public meeting. This motion was carried and Shevich was elected to represent the party at the joint discussion.

Thus the Progressive Labor party was launched by the side of the United Labor party, as a result of the split. According to the social status of the majority of their constituents, both parties were labor parties; according to the main issue and theory, one was a singletax party, backed by the Anti-Poverty Society and by the Land and Labor Clubs and their Central Committee—a pure singletax organization: the other was a Socialist party, backed by the Socialist Labor party—a pure Socialist organization; and according to the dominating nationality, one was an Irish-American party, the other German-American.

Both parties aimed primarily at agitation and the education of the people toward their respective ideas. Offices and voters they considered of secondary importance.

In strength they differed greatly. The United Labor party was larger, better organized, and had a strong popular leader, while the Progressive Labor party was organized only a few weeks before the election and had no strong popular leader.

With reference to the expected number of votes, each party was still quite hopeful. The *Standard* thought that the United Labor party would poll at least 250,000 votes, including 90,000 to 100,000 votes expected in the city of New York alone.³⁵ It

³⁴ *Sun*, Oct. 27, 1887, p. 1.

³⁵ *Standard*, Aug. 27, 1887, p. 4.

was claimed that Henry George himself expected 150,000 votes as a minimum. S. E. Shevich expected that the Socialists would poll at least 15,000 votes.³⁶

THE STATE CAMPAIGN OF 1887

Henry George made an energetic speaking tour throughout the state, in which he was accompanied by reporters of the *Herald* and the *World*. Father McGlynn, Louis F. Post and other leaders also made speaking tours over the state, and agitated in favor of the singletax and the United Labor party.

The challenge made by the Progressive Labor party to Henry George was accepted by the latter, and a discussion between S. E. Shevich and Henry George took place on October 23 in Miners' Theatre, at which Samuel Gompers presided. S. E. Shevich in his argument stated that the singletax, if realized without other social reforms, would be more brutal to labor than beneficial. He called the singletax a utopian theory born in one mind, and said that the man who can force one idea upon millions is only capable of originating a sect. He concluded:

"From the very beginning, after the close of the campaign last year, the whole system of Mr. George and his friends has been to substitute for the large party of labor something on the one hand like a church, and on the other hand like an ordinary political machinery Mr. George has succeeded in founding what I might call the church of Progress and Poverty, but he has not founded the great American labor party."³⁷

In reply, Henry George criticized Lassalle's iron law of wages. He stated that the singletax meant only a beginning of further reforms and readjustments in the social life, that it would benefit the farmers and wage-earners as well. "Employment being free and natural opportunities open, there could be no such thing as dispensing with labor."³⁸

This joint discussion was reported in full in the *Standard*. In reading it, one gets the impression that neither had any advantage over the other, although Shevich attacked the single-

³⁶ *World*, Aug. 19, 1887, p. 2.

³⁷ *Standard*, Oct. 29, 1887, p. 3.

³⁸ *Ibid.*

tax theory more energetically than Henry George attacked Socialism.

The authorities of the Catholic Church continued their strong opposition to the United Labor party and its leaders, Henry George and McGlynn, condemning them openly and secretly. Patrick Ford, editor-in-chief of the *Irish World*, suddenly changed his mind and went over to the Catholic Church, turning against his former protégé, Henry George, because of the "open and violent opposition" of the latter to the Catholic Church. This surprising change in the position of Ford was due, it was said, to the pressure brought upon him by the authorities of the Catholic Church, and second to the fact that the *Irish World* had lately been losing subscribers—an occurrence which was due, in the opinion of Ford, to his support of Henry George.

The General Master Workman, T. V. Powderly, of the Knights of Labor, who supported independent political action of labor in 1886, refused at this time to support the United Labor party.

The Anarchists, too, turned against Henry George. He not only refused to publish in his *Standard* a protest against the unfairness of the trial of the Chicago Anarchists, but he published an article in the second issue of his paper in which it was denied that the Anarchists had not had a fair trial.

The publication of such an article may be explained by the following reasons. First, Henry George was convinced that the article was correct. He was so much engaged in campaign work that he had not time properly to study the case. Second, he was decidedly opposed to the violent Anarchist tactics. Third, he tried to utilize every opportunity for "whitewashing" the United Labor party from the curse laid upon it by the leaders and press of the old parties which called the "George party" an organization made up by the "hordes of the Socialists, Anarchists, Nihilists," etc. for preaching "blood and revolution."

The publication of this article in the *Standard* was unfortunate, not only because its conclusions did not correspond to the real situation in Chicago, but because it did more harm than good for the success of the United Labor party. There were quite a considerable number of the Anarchists and their sympathizers in the city of New York at that time, especially among the Knights of Labor. All these Anarchists were greatly dis-

pleased with the attitude of Henry George toward the trial of the Chicago Anarchists, and they fervently agitated against the "George party."

The Republican and Democratic parties made a very vigorous campaign in view of the coming presidential election in 1888. Both, especially the latter, gave much more attention than in the previous campaigns, to the conditions of labor.

In spite of all these above-described odds against the United Labor party, it still received 72,000 votes as against 459,000 for the Republican and 480,000 for the Democratic party. The Progressive Labor party received only about 5,000 votes in the city of New York,³⁹ and hardly more in the entire state. John Swinton received in the seventh senatorial district 2,900 votes as against 2,300 for E. E. Glackin of the United Labor party, out of 24,000 votes cast for senatorial candidates in that district.⁴⁰

The high hopes of both labor parties had gone to pieces. Each received several times less votes than it expected. Furthermore, the United Labor party polled in the city of New York only 37,000 votes, that is, 31,000 fewer than Henry George received in the mayoralty campaign the previous fall. Considering a number of possible new voters who, under the influence of the Land and Labor Clubs and the Anti-Poverty Society, had joined the United Labor party, the loss of the labor votes in the city of New York was still greater than 31,000. Besides the diminution of votes, the campaign resulted in another negative feature. The list of subscribers to the *Leader* had fallen so low that the little daily paper was suspended soon after the campaign. Almost the same happened with the *Standard*. It lost more than one-half of its subscribers. From this blow the *Standard* never recovered. Had it not been a weekly paper, and helped by outside supporters, it could not have continued its existence.

Now, one may ask, what were the causes of such results for the United Labor party? The industrial conditions which had been at a turning point in the middle of 1886 showed still greater improvement during 1887. The relations between capital and labor had become less acute. Partly as a result of this

³⁹ *World*, Nov. 9, 1887, p. 1.

⁴⁰ *Sun*, Nov. 10, 1887, p. 2.

change and partly as a result of a strong political showing of organized labor in the fall of 1886, the police, the courts, and the legislature had also "improved" in regard to labor.

All these changes explain the decline of the labor excitement and of the interest of labor in independent politics. Many labor parties formed under various names in the other states of the Union in 1886 dissolved in 1887 and 1888. But the loss of almost one-half of the labor votes by Henry George in the city of New York can not be explained by the general causes above indicated; nor can it be explained by a direct loss to the Progressive Labor party, for the vote of the latter, having been only a few thousands, did not exceed by much the normal Socialist vote of former years, which was about 2,500 in the city of New York.

The split had other much more important results than the direct loss of a few thousand votes to the Socialists. It had a negative psychological influence upon organized labor, considerably weakening its confidence in the success of the United Labor party and minimizing its interest in independent politics. Apparently a considerable number of wage-earners partly abstained from voting and partly turned to the method of holding the balance of power. The new protective labor legislation favored by the Democratic party could serve as an attraction for the labor vote. Besides the loss of confidence among the ranks of the party, the ousting of the Socialists themselves meant a loss of energetic agitators and campaign stumpers with some political experience, and as a result it considerably weakened the campaign work of the United Labor party. This result of the split was understood by Henry George himself. Shortly after the state campaign, on November 25, 1887, he wrote to C. D. F. Gutschow of San Francisco, the German translator of "Progress and Poverty," explaining his action against the Socialists at the Syracuse convention and the harm they did for his state campaign. Nevertheless, he justified the ousting of the Socialists, saying:

"There was no alternative other than to consent to have the movement ranked as a Socialistic movement or to split with the Socialists.

Although this lost us votes for the present, I am perfectly certain that it will prove of advantage in the long run."⁴¹

The unsuccessful attempt of the Singletaxers to convert the United Labor party into a party of all classes also contributed its share to the loss of votes. Wage-conscious organized labor could neither comprehend nor agree with the Singletax doctrine of the identity of the interests of employers and employes, both of whom it classed as producers of the same category. This attempt, while resulting in the loss of labor votes did not draw to the United Labor party the employing classes.

As to the specific singletax issue, notwithstanding that a vague reaction against it had set in among the laboring masses, still it had, apparently, but little bearing upon the loss of votes. If the rank and file of the wage-earners did not favor it, neither did they oppose it, because the majority did not even understand this altogether too complex doctrine.

Still, 72,000 votes cast in only one state was a tolerably good showing for a new third party at that time.

⁴¹ *Life of Henry George*, New York, 1904, p. 501.

CHAPTER X

DOWNFALL OF THE UNITED LABOR PARTY

THE SPLIT AMONG THE SINGLETAXERS

The United Labor party as a new political organization, independent and distinct from all other organizations, had made its début. Although the results were not so favorable as expected, the leaders nevertheless very soon calmed down, finding the 72,000 votes quite satisfactory for the first step of a new party, for they considered the votes received as pure singletax votes given by the people "animated by principle, who can be counted on in any circumstances and against all odds."¹ Henry George, speaking of the mayoralty campaign of 1886, said:

"But there of course rallied around me large elements who neither understood nor appreciated the principles which alone induced me to accept a political nomination This year—1887—a vote for me was a vote for naked principle so uncompromisingly and unhesitatingly asserted as to drive off not only the Socialists, Anarchists, and cranks who constituted the 'progressive labor party' but also half-way men (reformers)."²

The conclusion which Henry George made was: "Let us push on the good work."³ On this the Singletaxers agreed. But very soon arose the question as to how to proceed. According to a resolution of the Syracuse Convention they had to call a national conference of the party and to convert it into a national party. To do this was only possible through a national campaign in the presidential election. As to this there appeared a disagreement among the leaders. The majority, headed by McGlynn, were in favor of an independent national campaign, while

¹ *Standard*, Nov. 12, 1887, p. 1.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*

Croasdale and Post opposed it. They favored in the presidential election the policy of holding of the balance of power and adopting independent political action only in states and congressional districts. Their views appeared in the *Standard* as early as the end of November.⁴

Now as to Henry George himself. Although he found some comfort in his belief that the 72,000 votes received in the state campaign were pure singletax votes, he was nevertheless greatly disappointed with the results of the campaign. The loss of so many labor votes in the city of New York and the great loss of the subscribers to the *Standard* were to him not only a blow to the advancement of the singletax theory but somewhat humiliating to his personal pride. In the *Standard* he again and again blamed McGlynn, McMackin, and Barnes for inducing him to accept the nomination for secretary of state. Furthermore, if he had had any hope to accomplish his reform scheme by the aid of organized labor, after the state campaign he had lost it. His disappointment with organized labor and labor parties made up, according to his expression, of "incongruous elements", was now complete. As the backbone of the United Labor party was still the labor element, he naturally considered that the career of the Singletax theory and of himself was closed as far as the United Labor party was concerned. He afterwards stated several times in the *Standard* that the United Labor party had collapsed in the state campaign of 1887.

As he did not oppose the idea of holding the balance of power in the national campaign, pointed out in the *Standard* by his closest followers, Croasdale and Post, he apparently already meditated swinging the forces of the United Labor party to the Democratic party in the coming presidential campaign, hoping successfully to agitate in behalf of his favored doctrines in the ranks of the Democratic party and to increase the circulation of the *Standard* for the sake of the same doctrines. But there was no immediate opportunity for such sudden change, and, moreover, the United Labor party and he himself stood on a strong singletax platform with some other radical demands—a platform which had nothing in common with the Democratic party.

⁴*Standard*, Nov. 26, 1887, pp. 1, 4.

Very soon an opportunity came. President Cleveland sent a message to Congress on December 6 in which he advised a slight reduction of the import duties on some raw materials. It was far from being a free-trade message. It decidedly repudiated free-trade doctrine.

But Henry George laid hold of this message. He greeted it warmly and commented favorably upon it in the *Standard*, calling "all parties, despite themselves, to aid Cleveland in his good work."⁵ He started at once to agitate in favor of the free trade doctrine, shifting his specific main issue, the singletax, to that of a subordinate one, free trade.

Some rumors began to circulate in the press that Henry George was abandoning the Syracuse platform and was going over to the Democratic party.

As a result of these rumors, which apparently were true in view of the new attitude of the *Standard*, McGlynn invited Henry George and his closest friends to an informal conference of the leaders of the United Labor party at Cooper Union about the middle of December. There were present McGlynn, Mc-Mackin, Barnes, George, Post, Croasdale, and Sullivan.

The tariff question was discussed at first. McGlynn, Mc-Mackin, and Barnes thought it to be the best policy for the United Labor party to ignore the tariff question in the coming presidential campaign, because this question, if raised, would split the party, and had been intentionally ignored in the previous campaigns and platforms.

George, Post, Croasdale and Sullivan believed that the tariff question in the presidential campaign could not be ignored, for it was becoming the main issue between the Democratic and Republican parties, and that the United Labor party ought to take also a definite stand on this issue.

McGlynn then asked Henry George if he should go into the presidential campaign on the Syracuse platform, to which Henry George answered that he should not. Then the "McGlynn men" outlined the plan to call a national conference of the United Labor party and to make an independent presidential campaign in the following states: New York, Connecticut, New Jersey,

⁵ *Standard*, Dec. 10, 1887, p. 4.

and Indiana. To this plan the "George men" objected on the ground that an independent campaign in those states would mean helping the Republicans to beat the Democrats, which plan they called the "Butlerizing of the United Labor party."

McGlynn answered that the United Labor party ought to go into the campaign independently and fight the rotten Democratic Tammany Hall interwoven with the Catholic ecclesiastical machine, and that there was not any possibility for joining the forces of the United Labor party with that of the Democratic party.⁶

The conference ended without any agreement between these two leaders and their followers. The first formal split between them had occurred. The *Standard* made the tariff reform its main issue in the coming campaign. "We cannot ignore this minor robber (tariff duties), and to fairly get at the greater robber (economic rent of land) we must fight the little one."⁷

Henry George found now that the two-party system, which he criticized in the previous campaigns, calling both the Republican and the Democratic parties "shamelessly corrupt and hopelessly decayed," constituted "the normal political division in every country,"⁸ and that they might hold together for a considerable time, if even "the life of distinctive principle has gone out of them But to bring a principle into politics it is not always necessary to start a new party."⁹ He denied now that it was altogether necessary for labor to go into independent politics, for "the real work of emancipating labor and bringing about reform is the work of education."¹⁰

Not to frighten the leaders of the Democratic Party by a newcomer as their competitor for spoils and not to give ground for belief that he had changed his course for some personal interests, he stated:

"I care little or nothing for party, for I regard parties not as ends but as means. I am not a political leader; and I do not aspire to be a political leader, not only for the reason that politics are not to my

⁶ *Standard*, Feb. 18, 1888, p. 1.

⁷ *Standard*, Jan. 7, 1888, p. 1.

⁸ *Standard*, Feb. 4, 1888, p. 1.

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

taste, but that I aspire to something much higher, a leadership of thought."¹¹

The second conflict which resulted in the ousting of the "George men" from the United Labor party¹² occurred at a meeting of the Executive Committee of the Anti-Poverty Society on February 13, 1888. The George men constituted the majority of the Committee. As McGlynn, the president of the society, learned a few days before the meeting that they were planning to suspend him until the next general meeting of the Society, he had appointed to the Executive Committee about a dozen new members, mainly from his former parishioners, according to the power conferred upon him by the constitution of the Society. When the George men came to the meeting, they found about half a dozen new members in the room. To the explanation of McGlynn that he had appointed new members, E. J. Shriver, treasurer of the society, and Louis F. Post (both George men) replied with a protest, calling McGlynn's new appointment arbitrary. Meanwhile new members continued to come in, as did several *bona fide* members—George men. Both factions had foresightedly reenforced themselves by a method of "packing"—the McGlynn faction by new appointments, and the George faction by *bona fide* members. But McGlynn had the majority on his side. William T. Croasdale presided. E. J. Shriver moved that the president of the society be suspended for a "grave cause" (for attacking Henry George for his new course in politics) until a meeting of the Society. This motion was seconded and an exciting debate followed.

McMackin and Barnes declared the motion out of order. But Chairman Croasdale ruled that the motion was in order. Barnes appealed from the decision of the chair. A roll call was taken by the chairman leaving out the *bona fide* and newly appointed members. This action evoked stormy protests. A motion then was instantly made to adjourn, and the George men left the room. The meeting was continued by the McGlynn fac-

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² The George men were formally ousted only from the Executive Committee of the Anti-Poverty Society, but it practically meant the ousting from the United Labor party.

tion alone. A motion was carried to expel the George men, who had just left the meeting.

A few days later the expelled George men of the Anti-Poverty Society gathered in a meeting as the Executive Committee of the Society, for the purpose of suspending McGlynn from the presidency. After a long discussion they abandoned this proposition and considered themselves as leaving the Anti-Poverty Society. It was obvious to them that a continuation of the struggle was useless, because the ranks of the Society were on the side of McGlynn. Not to make any further scandal, Henry George withdrew voluntarily from the Anti-Poverty Society.

The twenty-third assembly district organization of the United Labor party formally expelled Henry George for "abandoning the greater principle of the singletax for the lesser one of free trade, for having spoken of the party as a paper organization, and for supporting President Cleveland upon inspiration from Washington."¹³

Thus Henry George and his closest followers, a comparatively small number of men, not only had lost their control over the United Labor party, the Land and Labor organization, and Anti-Poverty Society, but were expelled from these organizations. The real cause of the split among the Singletaxers was neither theory nor doctrines, either of the singletax or of the tariff, for they all were convinced Singletaxers and Free-traders. It was the question of tactics, the new course of Henry George, his going over to the Democratic party, on which they split.

While Henry George was losing his popularity among the ranks of the United Labor party by his new course, McGlynn, the most popular man and hero on the *Standard*, was gaining influential power by remaining true to the original movement and its tactics. This and the strong personality of McGlynn explain why he so successfully opposed the new course of Henry George and outwitted him.

At a meeting of the Anti-Poverty Society on February 16, 1888, McGlynn stated:

"We are not going to allow ourselves to be made the wretched little bit of a tail to the Democratic kite If he (Henry George)

¹³ *Standard*, June 2, 1888, p. 1.

comes back into the party again, even if he does not support Cleveland or the Democratic party, he will have to take a much humbler position in the ranks than he has heretofore held.”¹⁴

To this Henry George replied:

“I am not ready to become the stalking horse and decoy duck of any political combination Yet it is because I have refused to surrender not merely my opinions but my firm convictions (the necessity to support the Democratic Party) that he (McGlynn) has assumed to excommunicate me from the United Labor Party, and to declare that, if ever permitted to come back, it must be to take a much humbler position. If the doctor will think, he will find it difficult to imagine a much humbler position than that which, out of deference to him, I have for some time occupied—that of an ostensible leader in a party in whose managing counsels I have been utterly ignored.”¹⁵

THE NATIONAL CAMPAIGN OF THE UNITED LABOR PARTY

The national conference of the United Labor party met in the Grand Opera House at Cincinnati, on May 15, 1888. Present were eighty-six delegates from the various states, as follows: New York, 41; Ohio, 25; Kentucky, 5; Michigan, 5; Kansas, 3; Maryland, 2; Illinois, 1; Iowa, 1; Wisconsin, 1; Rhode Island, 1; New Jersey, 1.

The conference resolved itself into a convention. An attempt was made to fuse with the Union Labor party, formed in a previous year at a conference of labor and reformers' organizations at Cincinnati, but this attempt failed.

There was adopted a platform similar to that adopted at the Syracuse convention. It reaffirmed the Singletax as its main issue, advocated the issue by the government of legal tender notes, without intervention of banks, and the administration by government of railroads and telegraphs, and favored legislation reducing the hours of labor, prohibiting child labor and convict competition, providing for sanitary inspection of tenements, factories and mines, and repealing the conspiracy laws. It declared in favor of the Australian system of balloting, demanded the simplification of legal procedure, and denounced the Democratic

¹⁴ *Standard*, Feb. 18, 1888, p. 3.

¹⁵ *Standard*, Feb. 18, 1888, p. 1.

and Republican parties.¹⁶ It entirely ignored the tariff issue. Robert H. Cowdry of Illinois and W. H. T. Wakefield of Kansas were chosen as candidates for president and vice president, respectively.

The state convention of the United Labor party at New York was held in Cooper Union on September 19 and 20.

As there were current some rumors that several leaders of the United Labor party were in a deal with the Republican party, McGlynn, at a meeting of the Executive Committee of the United Labor party on September 25, introduced a resolution, which was adopted, declaring that all officers of the party must support the whole United Labor party electoral ticket.¹⁷

The County Convention of the United Labor party was held at Clarendon Hall on October 10. James J. Coogan, a furniture dealer, real estate man, and large employer of labor, was unanimously nominated for mayor of New York.

HENRY GEORGE IN THE PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN FOR THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY

In the last copy of 1887 the *Standard* tried to show in an editorial that the Democratic party in the coming presidential campaign might get labor votes because the tariff reform was in the interests of labor.¹⁸ It criticized the supposed desire of the leaders of the United Labor party to gather again all the labor elements in the party. It said:

"Now, what his (McGlynn's) committee are waiting and hoping for is the formation of one of these 'labor parties,' composed of politically incongruous elements which have time and again proved utter failures."¹⁹ It then criticized the Union Labor party formed at a conference in Cincinnati on a platform "which was the result of the compromises of such a mixture of heterogeneous 'ists' and 'isms" There are various indications that the committee of which Dr. McGlynn is head are planning to make a mergerment of what they would call the United Labor party²⁰ with the Union Labor party, the Social-

¹⁶ *Standard*, May 26, 1888, p. 4.

¹⁷ *Standard*, Sept. 29, 1888, p. 1.

¹⁸ *Standard*, Feb. 18, 1888, p. 1.

¹⁹ *Standard*, Feb. 18, 1888, p. 1.

²⁰ After the state campaign in 1887, Henry George refused to use capital letters in the name of the United Labor party.

ists and all the other so-called 'labor elements,' upon some sort of a hodge-podge platform."²¹

Henry George denied, merely on constitutional grounds, that the singletax could be made an issue in the national campaign. To this McGlynn replied that the Federal jurisdiction fully extends over the District of Columbia and all the territories where the singletax can be realized by the Federal authority. Nevertheless, the tariff reform, put forth in the message of President Cleveland, was to Henry George the most important national issue in the coming presidential campaign. "I regard the nomination of Mr. Cleveland as a more important political event than anything that has occurred since the cease of the war," he wrote in the *Standard*.

The *Sun* charged that the advocates of Mayor Hewitt's proposal that the city should build and run rapid transit railroads had practically become Socialists. Henry George rejected this charge and blamed the Republicans for being Socialists. "The protective tariff is Socialism pure and simple."²²

The Mill tariff bill was reported to the house on April 2. The main changes were a somewhat higher duty on the poorer grades of unrefined sugar and a somewhat lower duty on the whiter grades. Henry George, commenting on this bill, expressed his satisfaction with it. "For the present time and situation it is probably better than a more radical bill would be."²³

He strongly opposed a third candidate in the coming presidential campaign. "In such a campaign as this, any attempt to run a third candidate on a singletax platform would not only be idle but harmful."²⁴ Even a singletax platform demanding absolute free trade was to him "chimerical,"²⁵ because it would take away so many votes from the Democratic party in its practical struggle against protection. "Thanks to Grover Cleveland's patriotism and courage, a grand opportunity is offered us to preach them (the singletax doctrines) through the ranks of a powerful party."²⁶

²¹ *Standard*, Feb. 18, 1888, p. 1.

²² *Standard*, March 10, 1888, p. 3.

²³ *Standard*, Apr. 7, 1888, p. 1.

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ *Standard*, Apr. 14, 1888, p. 1.

He sharply criticized McGlynn for not understanding the singletax principle. McGlynn in a speech called upon the city tenants not to pay more than a fair building rent. This Henry George termed as a "crazy demagogic scheme"²⁷ of McGlynn who had "utterly lost his grasp upon principle."²⁸ He then asked: "What right have tenants more than landlords to the free use of land made valuable by the whole community?"²⁹

The George men or the Singletaxers—Free-Traders, as they now called themselves—gathered in Cooper Union on August 7 for a conference. To avoid criticisms and other difficulties the call was issued only "for those who have made up their minds to support Cleveland and Thurman, the matter for consultation will be only as to how this support can be most effectively rendered This will be not a meeting for speaking, but a meeting for consultation,"³⁰—so wrote Henry George, urging all singletax men in sympathy with the purpose of the conference to be present. The necessity of such conference Henry George explained by "the fact that men whose only aim in politics is the emancipation of labor and the abolition of poverty, are supporting Cleveland with all their might for the very reason that the advocates of the protectionist superstition are telling workmen they should vote against him."³¹ Thus was a step taken to bring the Singletaxers—Free-Traders—together to find ways and means to fight those who were telling workmen not to vote for the Democratic party.

Louis F. Post was elected chairman. W. T. Croasdale then proposed a resolution requiring the gathering of signatures for a voting pledge for Cleveland, as had been done for Henry George at the beginning of the campaign of 1886. The pledge was entitled "The Singletax Cleveland Voters' Enrollment Blank."

This plan was adopted. A campaign committee of nine was then elected to gather signatures for the voting pledge, and also to provide for the holding of public meetings and the distribution of literature.

²⁷ *Standard*, July 7, 1888, p. 1.

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ *Standard*, Aug. 4, 1888, p. 1.

³¹ *Loc. cit.*

The leaders of the Democratic party in New York, although wanting the votes which Henry George could marshal for their party by his influence in the campaign agitation, opposed his radicalism on the tariff question. A fear that his preaching of free trade might frighten voters away from the Democratic party made them pray, "Deliver us from our friends!"³² and caused them to give out as a marching refrain in the parade of the Democratic party the following lines:

"Don't, don't, don't be afraid,
Tariff reform is not free trade!"³³

There was much incrimination and recrimination by the leaders of the United Labor party on one hand and the Henry George people on the other. The former blamed the latter as acting by "inspiration from Washington" and as being "renegades," "traitors," and "in a deal with the Democratic party;" while the latter blamed the United Labor party leaders as being "protectionists sold out to the Republican party," and so forth.

As a matter of fact these mutual incriminations were very feebly founded, if founded at all. The honesty of purpose of Henry George and McGlynn could not be questioned. If McMackin and Barnes were somewhat uncertain, McGlynn, under whose control these two men were, sincerely believed in the correctness of his action for making an independent campaign of the United Labor party. Moreover, as a Singletaxer he was a convinced free trader. Ignoring the tariff issue in the campaign, he opposed both old parties, and if he hated the Democratic party more than the Republican, then there were certain causes which have been described. The same ethical credit was to be given Henry George. The radical change of his front was due to his entire disappointment in the power of organized labor, and to his desire to preach his doctrines through the ranks of the Democratic party. No direct personal interests nor pecuniary gains were considered by him.

Hardly anyone can hold either Henry George as a "traitor" or McGlynn as "sold out to the Republican party" on account of

³² *The Life of Henry George*, New York, 1904, p. 512.

³³ *Ibid.*

the fact that some minor leaders in their following desired office or publicity making for that purpose a "deal" with the old parties, Democratic or Republican.

THE RESULTS OF THE CAMPAIGN

In the presidential election on November 7, 1888, the United Labor party candidate, R. H. Gowdry, received only 2808 votes, of which 2668 were polled in the state of New York and the remainder, 140, in the state of Illinois. The United Labor party candidate for mayor of the city of New York, J. J. Coogan, received somewhat fewer than 10,000 votes.³⁴

This was indeed a very poor showing for the United Labor party, and meant its downfall and disappearance from the political arena.

No better success had Henry George and his friends in stumping for the Democratic party, which was badly beaten by the Republicans. The Singletax Cleveland Voters' Enrollment Blank had brought in only about 11,000 signatures³⁵ over all the United States. The number of subscribers to the *Standard*, instead of an expected increase, had decreased. The financial help to the paper was far below that which was hoped for by Henry George. The free-trade doctrine, which was the main thing to him in the campaign, did not become a popular issue at all. The American masses favored protection, and it was not so easy to change their mind as Henry George thought. So his new course proved to be a failure as far as its direct main aims were concerned.

Commenting on the fact that the Democratic vote among farmers was weak, Henry George believed:

"If the *Standard* could have afforded to send the farmers of New York, early in the campaign, copies . . . for little time, it alone could have carried New York for Cleveland and Thurman."³⁶

This shows that Henry George still maintained the idea that farmers were a very suitable element for his doctrines, notwith-

³⁴ *The Press*, Nov. 8, 1888, p. 1.

³⁵ *The Public*, Sept. 1, 1911, p. 907.

³⁶ *Ibid.*

standing the fact that all the previous campaigns had resulted in an opposite direction.

The utter failure of both factions in the national campaign ended the singletax agitation in the American labor movement demonstrating that the 72,000 votes given for Henry George in the state campaign the previous year were not pure Singletax votes which could have been counted on "in any circumstances and against all odds." These votes were given rather for Henry George himself than for his singletax theory. The split among the Singletaxers themselves proved to be even more disastrous for the United Labor party than the ousting of the Socialists a year before. What confidence for the success of the United Labor party was left among its ranks was entirely destroyed by the split evoked by the sudden and radical change of political front on the part of Henry George. Moreover, this change injured his favorable popularity among the masses and greatly lessened his following.

The attempt to bring the singletax into practical politics and to make it the issue of organized labor did not succeed, and even the agitation through the ranks of the Democratic party failed to reach its direct aims, as the foregoing narrative shows. One may ask what was meant by all this trouble, and expenditure of energy and time, in the fervent prosecution of the singletax issue by Henry George and his friends. Had it no results whatever?

It had a far-reaching educational value: It aroused the minds of the masses, it stirred up the reformers, it excited the politicians, and it awakened an earnest discussion among academic circles, calling attention to the land problem and to the labor problem.

The singletax agitation was one of the events in the birth of the modern American democracy. The Socialists issued from the struggle with the conviction that it was much better for them to make political campaigns independently than to fuse with other, non-Socialist parties, and to the present day they have never again attempted fusion tactics.

The labor unions found through the whirlwind of the singletax agitation, that it was better for them to confine their activities to the economic field than to "meddle" with the attempts of independent politics on some purely theoretical issue.

The Singletaxers themselves learned by their experience in the political campaigns that it was hardly possible for them to create a specific political party to prosecute their theory or to utilize some other party for the same purpose. In that respect they came to the conclusion that distinctive formal organization for their ends was perhaps "a little worse than useless, except as on occasion it might spring spontaneously out of large popular demands."³⁷

They worked out their own specific method of propaganda, a system of loose conferences and agitation through literature and public speaking among all classes of the people in the nation, utilizing every opportunity. To this method they have adhered to the present time. But their gain from the movement was even more than that. They greatly popularized their theory, pushing it to the foreground as the leading issue of the mass movement. Every theory gets its weight and importance when it is applied to practice, and especially when it is backed by mass organizations. Although the Singletax theory as such was never accepted by organized labor—at least by its vast majority—it seemed to outsiders to be the real recognized issue of the labor movement, especially in the mayoralty campaign of 1886 and in the state campaign of 1887. This apparent support of the singletax by organized labor made it tremendously important, and, in the eyes of its opponents, even "dangerous." This explains the alarm of the old parties, their press, and the authorities of the Catholic Church in New York during and after the campaign of 1886, and the excommunication of Father McGlynn, in particular.

But when the singletax ceased to be even an apparent issue of the mass movement, it became again quite a harmless theory. The authorities of the Catholic Church in New York found now that in the singletax theory there was nothing inconsistent with religion, that is, contrary to their previous statements, made after the campaign of 1886. McGlynn was reinstated in 1892, although he remained a convinced Singletaxer just as before, only with this difference, that he was no more a leader of organized labor in its political efforts.

³⁷ *The Public*, Sept. 1, 1911, p. 839.

Attention should be called to a quite important reform successfully prosecuted by the Singletaxers with the decisive aid of organized labor. This was the Australian ballot system. The serious agitation in favor of this reform was started shortly after the campaign of 1886. It was taken up by organized labor over all the Union and within a few years adopted in every state. This reform, as a direct gain for the democratization of the election laws in America, remains as a living monument to the singletax agitation in the labor movement in the second half of the eighties.

Besides these practical, direct and indirect results, representing an important service of the singletax agitation and its leader, Henry George, to the rising democracy, this narrative has tried to show, on a small scale but somewhat in detail, the picturesqueness of the American mass movements, the constantly and rapidly changing environmental conditions, the shifting of theories, doctrines, and reform schemes, and the radical changes in the methods for their prosecution; in short, the colors and shades which distinctly characterize the young and rapidly developing American nation, ambitious as it is for achievements.

APPENDIX I*

"New York, August 26, 1886.

"James P. Archibald, Esq., Secretary, Conference Labor Association.

"Dear Sir:—You ask me whether, if the labor Associations of New York were to nominate me for Mayor, I would accept.

"My personal inclinations are to say 'No.' I have no wish to hold office, and my hopes of usefulness have run in another line. But there are considerations which, under certain conditions, would compel me to say 'Yes.'

"I have long believed that the labor movement could accomplish little until carried into politics, and that workingmen must make their ballots felt before they can expect any real attention to their needs, or any real respect for their rights—before we can hope to alter those general conditions which, despite the fact that labor is the producer of all wealth, make the term 'working-man' synonymous with poor man.

"Since the question of chattel slavery was finally settled I have acted with the Democratic party in the hope that, dead issues being buried, the living issue of industrial slavery might come to the front. The time has now arrived when the old party lines have lost their meaning, and old party cries their power, and when men are ready to turn from quarrels of the past to grapple with the questions of the present. The party that shall do for the question of industrial slavery what the Republican party did for the question of chattel slavery must, by whatever name it shall be known, be a working-man's party—a party that shall reassert the principles of Thomas Jefferson in their application to the questions of the present day, and be Democratic in aim as well as in name.

"I have seen the promise of the coming of such a party in the growing discontent of labor with unjust social conditions, and in the increasing disposition to pass beyond the field of trades-associations into the larger sphere of political action. With this disposition I am in full sympathy. I see in political action the only way of abolishing that injustice which robs labor of its natural reward and makes the very 'leave to toil' a boon—that monstrous injustice which crowds families into tenement-rooms of our cities and fills even our new States with tramps; that turns human beings into machines,

* Ch. V, note 4.

robs childhood of joy, manhood of dignity, and old age of repose; that slaughters infants more ruthlessly than did Herod's swordsmen; that fosters greed, begets corruption, breeds vice and crime, and condemns children yet unborn to the brothel and the penitentiary. Seeing this, I welcome any movement to carry the vital questions of our day into politics, and will do whatever I can to help it on.

"It seems to me, moreover, that a fitting and hopeful place for such a movement to begin is in our municipalities, where we may address ourselves to what lies nearest at hand, and avoid dissensions that, until the process of economic education has gone further, might divide us on national issues. The foundation of our system is in our local governments.

"Nor is there any part of our country in which there is greater need of an earnest effort to make politics mean more than a struggle for office than in the City of New York. In this great city, the metropolis of the Western Hemisphere, municipal government has reached a pitch of corruption that, the world over, throws a slur and a doubt upon free institutions. Politics has become a trade, and the management of elections a business. The organizations that call themselves political parties are little better than joint-stock companies for assessing candidates and dividing public plunder, and even judicial positions are virtually bought and sold.

"With unsurpassed natural advantages—the gateway of a continental commerce—New York is behind in all else that the citizen might justly be proud of. In spite of the immense sums constantly expended, her highways, her docks, her sanitary arrangements, are far inferior to those of first-class European cities; the great mass of her people must live in tenement houses, and human beings are here packed together more closely than anywhere else in the world; and though the immense values created by the growth of population might, without imposing any burden upon production, be drawn upon to make New York the most beautiful and healthful of cities, she is dependent upon individual benevolence for such institutions as the Astor Library and the Cooper Institute, and private charity must be called upon for "fresh-air funds" to somewhat lessen the horrible infant mortality of the tenement district. Such parts as we have are beyond the reach of the great mass of the population who, living in contracted rooms, have no other place than the drinking-saloon for the gratification of social instincts, while hundreds of thousands of children find their only playground in crowded streets.

"Hitherto all movements for municipal reform in New York have sprung from political 'halls,' or have originated with wealthy citizens, whose sole and futile remedy for civic corruption has been the election of respectabilities to office. They have aimed at effects rather than at causes, at outgrowths rather than at the root, and they have accomplished nothing radical or lasting.

"It is time for the great body of the citizens of New York to take some step to show that they have a deeper interest in the government of this great city than whether this or that set of politicians shall divide the spoils, and to demonstrate their power in a way to make their influence felt in every branch of administration. And in the American city where monstrous wealth and monstrous want make their most shocking contrast is a fitting place to begin a movement which shall aim at the final assertion of the natural and unalienable rights of man."

"A movement begun by the Labor Associations in this spirit, and with these aims, would not be a class movement. It would in reality be a movement of the 'masses against the rule of the classes.' It would draw strength from that great body of citizens who, though not working-men in the narrow sense of the term, feel the bitterness of the struggle for existence as much as does the manual laborer, and are as deeply conscious of the corruptions of our politics and the wrongs of our social system. In its broad political sense the term 'workingman' does not refer to particular occupations, but divides those who have to work that others may enjoy from those who can appropriate the produce of others' work. There is and there can be an idle class only where there is a disinherited class. Where all men stood on an equality with regard to the use of the earth and the enjoyment of the bounty of their Creator, *all* men would belong to the working class. 'He who will not work, neither shall he eat' is not merely the injunction of the Apostle, it is the mandate of Nature which yields wealth to Labor, and to Labor alone.

"Feeling on these matters as I have said, my sense of duty would not permit me to refuse any part assigned me by the common consent of earnest men really bent upon carrying into politics the principles I hold dear. Yet before I can accept the nomination of which you speak I wish to have it clearly shown that the workingmen of New York want me to be a candidate and will support me with their votes. I have no dread of finding myself in the minority; but enough so-called labor movements have proved failures. Another failure would hurt the very cause we wish to help.

"Such a movement as is now proposed ought not to be lightly entered into. The workingmen of New York have it in their power to elect whom they please, and to open a new era in American politics; but to do this they must be united, must be earnest, and must have faith in themselves. Outside of the ranks of organized labor there are thousands and thousands heartily sick of the corruptions of machine politics who would join in a movement for principle that gave fair promise of success. But without this promise of success an independent movement could not command even the votes of those who wished it well. For the majority of men, though they may ap-

plaud his nomination, will not vote for a third candidate whose election seems hopeless. Therefore it is that any political movement such as you propose must manifest strength at the outset if it is to prove formidable at the polls.

"It is both the right and duty of workingmen to turn to political action for the redress of grievances. Whatever excuse there may be for violence in countries where aristocratic political institutions yet exist, and standing armies prevent expression of the popular will, here, where manhood suffrage prevails and the people are the source of political power, the ballot is the proper means of protest, and the only instrument of reform. And it is only by its intelligent use that social disaster can be avoided.

"For this reason it seems to me that the only condition on which it would be wise in a Labor Convention to nominate me, or on which I should be justified in accepting such a nomination, would be that at least thirty thousand citizens should, over their signatures, express the wish that I should become a candidate, and pledge themselves in such case to go to the polls and vote for me. This would be a guaranty that there should be no ignominious failure, and a mandate that I could not refuse. On this condition I would accept the nomination if tendered to me.

"Such a condition, I know, is an unusual one; but something unusual is needed to change the habitual distrust and contempt with which workingmen's nominations have come to be regarded, into the confidence that is necessary to success. It may be harder to get thirty thousand signatures in advance than, with the confidence thus inspired, to bring several times that number of votes to the polls; but unless there is in the movement earnestness enough to do hard things, it is idle to enter upon the work.

"With this frank statement of my views and feelings, I put the matter, through you, in the hands of the Conference and of the Labor Organizations.

Fraternaly yours,

HENRY GEORGE."

APPENDIX II*

Constitution and by-laws adopted by the temporary Executive Committee of the United Labor Party on December 1, 1886.

"We, the representatives of the United Labor Party of the city and county of New York, believe that governmental corruption and injustices spring from neglect of the self-evident truth that all men are created equal, that the advantages arising from social growth and improvement belong, of right, to society at large; that in the drawing of grand-jurors there shall be no distinction of class; that the property qualification for trial jurors should be abolished; that equal pay for equal work should be in public employment accorded without distinction of sex; that police interference with peaceful assemblages should cease; that our elective methods should be reformed; that the people of New York should have full control of their own local affairs; that the procedure of our courts should be simplified; that the laws for the safety and sanitary inspection of buildings should be enforced; that all laws which bear unjustly on labor should be abolished; that in public work all labor should be directly employed; that all taxes on buildings and improvements should be abolished; that all taxes should be levied on land values which arose from and are due solely to increase of population; that existing means of transit should no longer be left in the hands of corporations, but should by lawful process be assumed by the city and operated for the public benefit; and that the true purpose of government is the maintenance of that sacred right of property which secures to every man the fruits of his own labor—do hereby declare and establish the following constitution and by-laws.

"The organization of this party shall consist:

- "1. Of a County General Committee.
- "2. Of a County Executive Committee.
- "3. Of Assembly District Organizations.
- "4. Of Assembly District Executive Committees.
- "5. Of Election District Organizations.

"The County General Committee shall be the highest authority within this county. This body alone shall have the power to amend or to alter this Constitution.

"The officers of the General Committee shall consist of a Chairman,

* Chap. VII, note 6.

a Recording Secretary, a Financial Secretary, and a Treasurer. These officers shall be elected by the General Committee for the term of one year, and shall remain in office until successors are elected.

"The delegates to the General Committee shall be elected by the Assembly District organization in the following manner: For each 200 votes, or majority fraction thereof, cast by that district at the previous election for the candidates of this party, one member of the district organization shall be elected as delegate to the committee.

"Each delegate to the General Committee shall be in possession of proper credentials for which blanks shall be furnished by the County Executive Committee, and which shall be signed by the Chairman and Recording Secretary of the District Association.

"Regular meetings of the General Committee shall be held the first Thursday in each month. A special meeting can be called when two-thirds of the members of the County Executive Committee so decide.

THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

"The delegation from each Assembly District shall submit to the General Committee for approval the name of one of their number to serve on the Executive Committee.

"The duties of the County Executive Committee shall be to exercise general supervision over the county organization; to represent the same; to approve or disapprove the elections of all officers elected by the Assembly District organization; and to carry out all measures appertaining to the same.

"The County Executive Committee shall meet at least once every two weeks.

"The County Executive Committee shall have the right to levy a regular or special tax on the members of the Assembly District Organizations, subject to the approval of the General Committee.

"The County Executive Committee shall call and make arrangements for Congressional, Senatorial, Assembly, Aldermanic, and Judiciary Conventions within this county and shall fix the representation thereto. All such conventions shall be presided over by persons selected by the County Executive Committee. Such conventions shall select a vice-president and a recording secretary and shall transact no other business than the nomination of candidates.

ASSEMBLY DISTRICT ORGANIZATIONS.

"The Assembly District Organizations shall consist of citizens and those who have declared their intention to become such, living within a certain assembly district who recognize and subscribe to the platform and principles of this party, and who have severed all connec-

tion with other existing parties. Each applicant for membership must be vouched for by two members of the same organization.

"The officers of each Assembly District Organization shall consist of a President, Vice-President, Recording Secretary, Corresponding Secretary, Financial Secretary, Treasurer, and Sergeant-at-Arms, each to be elected for the term of one year.

"Rules for the election of standing and special committees.

"Duties usual in recognized associations.

"Applications for membership.

"For all election public notice in recognized party's paper.

"Dues no less than ten cents each month. In cases of inability to pay members will be excused for certain period.

"Notes of meetings.

"The Assembly District Organization shall (besides the transaction of political business) provide for lectures, debates, and entertainments for the education of its members and for the dissemination of the principles of the party.

"Twenty-five members constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

ASSEMBLY DISTRICT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

"One member from each election district; duty-supervision and to carry out all orders of Assembly District Organization.

"Meeting twice each month.

"May suspend or expel any member of the Assembly District Organization. Expelled member may appeal at the next meeting of the Assembly District Organization.

ELECTION DISTRICT ORGANIZATION.

"All members of an Assembly District Organization shall be members of their respective election district.

"Duties of the election district representative, supervision.

"To make house to house canvasses during the campaign and to cause worthy citizens to join the organization of the district."

This was adopted unanimously on December 1, 1886.¹

¹ *Leader*, Dec. 2, 1886, p. 1.

APPENDIX III*

The project of the provisions for the constitutional convention and other labor laws, worked out by the laws' committee of the Central Labor Union and the United Labor Party at the end of 1886.

1. An act to amend Chapter 410 of the laws of 1882, making departments and commissions in New York single-headed, and providing for their election by popular vote.

2. An act regulating employers' liability for injuries to servants and others.

3. An act removing property qualification from grand and petit jurors.

4. An act limiting the time in which covenants may be allowed to run with the land.

5. An act forbidding the employment of children under the age of fourteen years in any capacity.

6. An act allowing the same privileges in actions for the recovery of wages to workingmen as the law now gives to women.

7. An act preventing the removal from the District Courts to the Common Pleas on giving a bond.

8. An act preventing the "truck" system.

9. An act amending the mechanics' lien law.

10. An act abolishing the conspiracy laws.

11. An act providing for the incorporation of trades unions, and other associations organized by the working masses.

12. An act allowing inspectors of elections to any political party polling one-fourth of the total vote cast in any city or county.

13. An act providing for an improved system of balloting at elections.

14. An act to improve and further expand the law and practice of arbitration.

15. An act providing additional remedies in cases of injuries to children employed in factories.

16. An act providing for the safety and more complete sanitary inspection of places where mining, manufacturing and building are carried on.

17. An act abolishing fees in District Courts.

18. An act abolishing extra allowances to lawyers in all cases.

* Chap. VII, note 4.

19. An act raising the limit of recovery from \$5,000 to \$10,000 for injuries resulting in death.

20. An act providing for industrial or technical education in connection with the common school system.

21. An act repealing the act which requires that a bond must be given by guardians *ad litem* of minors in accident cases.

22. An act to regulate the business of pawnbroking.

23. An act to take away the power of parties to an action to stipulate that referees shall receive any more than the statutory rate of compensation.

24. An act equalizing military as well as jury duty.

"We intend pushing all these measures energetically in the Legislature, and hope that many, if not all of them, will be placed on our statute book."

FRED C. LEUBUSCHER,
*Secretary of the Laws Committee.*¹

¹ *Leader*, Dec. 31, 1886, p. 1.

APPENDIX IV*

Resolutions of the Assembly District Organizations of the United Labor Party in the State of New York before the State Convention at Syracuse, 1887.

1st. Assembly District: Jeremiah Murphy, chairman; delegates elected to the State Convention: Edw. McGlynn, J. H. Norton, and Thos. Moran; alternates: Daniel Murphy, John Fay and Wm. Brickfield.

At a meeting on August 11 a resolution was adopted condemning the decision of the County General Committee in regard to the exclusion of the members of the Socialist Labor Party and demanding the reconsideration of the decision.²

2nd. Assembly District: W. Russell, chairman; delegates: James Degnan, J. T. Burke, and J. Oliver Kane; alternates: John Crowley, Wm. E. Fales, and N. A. Tucker.

At a meeting on August 9 the ruling of McMackin against the Socialists was approved.³

3rd. Assembly District: Wm. Moles, chairman; delegates: G. W. Robinson, Wm. Lockhead, and P. J. Doody; alternates: L. P. Howe, Fred Reibetanz, and D. Kronberg.

At a regular meeting on August 9th, the action of the County General Committee against the Socialists was indorsed.⁴

At a special meeting on August 15 the delegates were instructed to sustain the eight-hour law for letter-carriers and to advocate the soldiers and sailors' bill.⁵

4th. Assembly District: Phillip J. Scannel, president; delegates: P. J. Scannel, Wm. B. Clark, and John Tobin; alternates: E. I. Dontey, Dr. Coughlin, and B. Lowe.

At a meeting on August 13 a letter was received from John McMackin explaining his ruling in regard to members of the Socialist Labor Party. After a long discussion the ruling of McMackin was indorsed.⁶

* Chap. VIII, note 10.

² *Leader*, Aug. 12, 1887, p. 2.

³ *Leader*, Aug. 10, 1887, p. 2; *Standard*, Aug. 13, 1887, p. 1.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ *Leader*, Aug. 16, 1887, p. 2.

⁶ *Leader*, Aug. 15, 1887, p. 2.

5th Assembly District Delegates: J. J. Joyes, Charles White, and Edward Klenbe; alternates: Carpar Aronson, Daniel McCloskey, Joseph B. Boyte.

At a meeting on August 10 the ruling of McMackin was indorsed.⁷

6th Assembly District. Delegates: Thos. F. Relley, James F. Crosson, and Thos. F. Kenney.

At a meeting on August 10 a resolution was adopted declaring against the ruling of McMackin and demanding that the County General Committee ought to reconsider the ruling.⁸

7th Assembly District. Population mainly wage-earners, but somewhat migratory and apathetic in elections; many clerks in the retail stores controlled by their employers.⁹

At a meeting on July 28 the following delegates were elected: W. J. Croasdale, H. Alden Spencer and E. A. Dease. Alternates: A. T. Thayer, W. G. Crowley and P. Connoghan.

Then followed a bitter discussion between the Singletaxers and the Socialists. Henry Cordes attacked socialism and socialistic tendencies in the United Labor Party, while several other members held that the Socialists "were the only honest members of the party."¹⁰

R. J. Hinton resigned from the County General Committee and Assembly Executive Committee.¹¹

At a meeting on August 11 the ruling of McMackin was indorsed.¹²

9th Assembly District. Delegates: Wm. A. Mass, John Kehoe, and J. J. Sweeney; alternates: Eugene Blume, Geo. A. Hunter, and F. Herben. At a meeting on July 12 William A. Mass offered a resolution to the effect that the delegates be instructed to make no deals and to nominate none other than the straight Labor ticket, which was adopted. At a meeting July 21 on instruction to the delegates it was unanimously accepted with the following directions: (1) To keep harmony in the delegation from the city of New York; (2) Not to allow any clause to be inserted in the platform which could only have for its effect to estrange a "valuable and pure minded element" [the Socialists] from us; (3) To see that the platform does not talk "over the heads of the masses of our voting population;" (4) To endeavor to embody in the platform that all agencies which are monopolies in their character, shall be nationalized; (5) Not to try to form a school of political science, but to help to shape a party strong enough to redeem the republic of Jefferson and Franklin.¹³

⁷ *Standard*, Aug. 20, 1887, p. 3.

⁸ *Standard*, Aug. 13, 1887, p. 1.

⁹ *Leader*, July 2, 1887, p. 1.

¹⁰ *Leader*, July 29, 1887, p. 2.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² *Standard*, Aug. 13, 1887, p. 1.

¹³ *Leader*, July 22, 1887, p. 2.

11th Assembly District. Colored voters strong—in sympathy with labor; Frank Ferrell's residence; the majority of the election districts organized; delegates: Frank J. Ferrell, William P. Rogers, and T. B. Wakeman; alternates: Edward W. Davis, Charles C. Poole, and J. F. Darling.

12th Assembly District. Delegates: Paul Wilzig, B. Davis, and William Hawley; alternates: Edward Finkelstone and Mat. Altman. After the ruling of McMackin, Hawley and Wilzig resigned and the whole set of the delegates were re-elected as follows: delegates: Mat Altman, B. Davis, and Edward Finkelstone; alternates: Charles Lesser and S. Prime.

At a meeting on August 12 a communication was received from W. Hawley, chairman of the delegates to the County General Committee, stating that the Socialists had no standing in that body. Edward Bauke proposed that the resolutions condemning the action of John McMackin, which were passed by the 8th Assembly District organization, be adopted. The motion was carried. Davis suggested that effort be made to have the County General Committee hold a meeting before the delegates started for Syracuse.

Hammond Miller, Samuel Gompers, F. Furtoch, and Featrock were nominated as candidates for delegates to the County General Committee.

W. Hawley tendered his resignation as delegate to Syracuse to which Sindler objected, saying that it ought to be understood that neither McMackin nor Henry George controlled the organization, but the workingmen themselves.

Finkelstone said that the delegates represented the interests of the district and the labor interests of the city. They had been legally elected to their position. He thought they might be locked out at Syracuse, and therefore, let the delegates resign and then re-elect them. Davis offered a resolution to the effect that the election of all the delegates be declared null and void.

S. Gompers thought it would look like worked business to declare the action null and void. They must give reasons for such action. J. B. Lyons said that the organization must not give the convention a chance to throw them out. Sindler thought it would be just the same if they were re-elected. They had been elected legally, and were the properly authorized delegates.¹⁴

At the final meeting before the convention, on August 15, a resolution was adopted demanding that the delegates vote as a unit: for the name of the United Labor Party; for a more radical platform stating that there cannot be any harmony between capital and labor and demanding the public ownership of the means of transportation

¹⁴ *Leader*, Aug 16, 1887, p. 2.

and communication and the instruments of production; if the above cannot be adopted, then, to vote for the Clarendon Hall Platform; and to vote for resolutions protesting against the ruling of McMackin.

15th Assembly District. Edward Conklin, president; delegates: Charles Brice, Edward Conklin, and J. F. Coughlin; alternates: P. Schaettgan, P. J. Hartford, and Thomas F. Conroy.

16th Assembly District. Germans organized; J. J. McGrath, chairman of the English-speaking branch and H. C. Markuse, chairman of the German-speaking branch; delegates: Dr. M. B. Levenson, J. J. McGrath, and H. Markuse; alternates: James W. Sullivan, H. Emrich, and Frank Bleyer.

At a meeting of the German branch on July 28 the committee which was appointed to confer with the English branch reported that the latter had refused to recognize the former as being part of its membership, thus debarring the 175 German-speaking members from participating in the election of delegates to the convention. A committee was appointed with the instructions to draw up a protest against the election of delegates by the English-speaking branch, such protest to be forwarded to the County General Committee for action. The same committee shall also call upon the English branch to ask them to hold a joint meeting for the purpose of electing delegates.¹⁵

At a meeting of the English-speaking branch on August 1, a communication from the German branch requesting that they be allowed to merge their branch into the regular association was received, and, after much debate, was laid over, pending the decision of the County General Committee. The decision of the County General Committee was sustained.¹⁶

At the next meeting of the German-speaking branch on August 11 a resolution was adopted condemning the County General Committee and the English-speaking branch of the 16th Assembly District organization for not allowing the German-speaking branch with the membership of 175 to participate in election of delegates to the state convention.¹⁷

17th Assembly District. J. H. McGee, chairman; at a meeting on July 13 were thirty new members proposed, three of whom were admitted; when the name of the fourth was read, the chairman ruled that the same being a member of the Socialist Labor Party, could not be admitted as a member of the United Labor Party. This decision of the chair aroused the majority of the members present. A motion to impeach the chairman was made, whereupon the latter adjourned the meeting amid great excitement.

At the next meeting on July 20 the following delegates were elected:

¹⁵ *Leader*, July 29, 1887, p. 2.

¹⁶ *Leader*, Aug. 10, 1887, p. 2.

¹⁷ *Standard*, Aug. 20, 1887, p. 3. *Leader*, Aug. 12, 1887, p. 2.

James H. Magee, John A. Sullivan, and Robert Hamilton; alternates: Charles A. Young, Adolph Geitz, and John Savage. At a meeting on August 11 the ruling of McMackin was condemned.¹⁸

18th Assembly District. Location of the St. Stephen's Parish; Ph. Kelly, chairman; delegates: John McMackin, Ph. J. Kelly, and Wm. J. Boytan; alternates: J. J. Gahan, A. A. Levey, and Frank Taglibue.

At a meeting on August 11 the delegates were instructed to support the Clarendon Hall Platform and oppose the changing of the party's name leaving out the word "Labor." The decision of McMackin was condemned.¹⁹

19th Assembly District. Wm. P. O'Meara, chairman; delegates: William P. O'Meara, W. Anderson, and Frank Horn; alternates: P. H. Gardand, J. J. Murray, and Charles H. Mitchell. At a meeting on July 29, Wm. P. O'Meara, chairman, stated "that while he was not a Socialist and was opposed to their principles as being 'too mooney' and would never become one of them because 'he was not built that way,' he thought the Socialists ought to be admitted, and that membership in the Socialist Labor Party was, in his opinion no bar."²⁰

A resolution approving the decision of the County Executive Committee permitting the members of the Socialist Labor Party to be members in the United Labor Party was adopted.²¹

20th Assembly District. Bohemians and Germans organized. Delegates: Hugh Whoriskey, Thomas F. Neill and Edward Murphy; alternates: Ernest Bohn, William Cowan, and Charles Ryan. At an exciting meeting on August 8 the resolution of the eighth Assembly District was adopted unanimously and the seventeen delegates to the County General Committee were instructed to vote for the reconsideration of the decision against the Socialists.²²

21st Assembly District. Dr. Gottheil, chairman; delegates: J. J. O'Brien, R. D. Hill, and A. R. Hamilton; alternates: John Kelley, Dr. W. S. Gottheil, and S. E. Phile.

22nd Assembly District. Besides the English-speaking organization, there was a strong German-speaking association. J. O'Dair, chairman and the main organizer of the district; delegates: James Redpath, W. J. O'Dair, and Charles Field; alternates: Thomas Walsh, Prof. Daniel De Leon, and Ernest Oldenbush.

The German branch held a meeting on August 8. A resolution was adopted to call a special meeting on August 9 to protest against the decision of the County General Committee.

Prof. De Leon declared that McMackin's decision was illegal; he

¹⁸ *Standard*, Aug. 20, 1887, p. 3. *Leader*, Aug. 8, 1887, p. 2.

¹⁹ *Standard*, Aug. 20, 1887, p. 3. *Leader*, Aug. 12, 1887, p. 2.

²⁰ *Leader*, July 30, 1887, p. 2.

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² *Leader*, Aug. 9, 1887, p. 2.

also read a part of the minutes of the platform committee, from which it appears that at the time when the platform was under consideration, McMackin had conceded that the Socialist Labor Party was not a political organization.²³

27th Election District. Organization of the 22nd Assembly District Organization in a meeting on the same evening adopted a resolution condemning the anti-Socialist decision of the County General Committee. At a meeting of the Assembly District Organization, Archibald objected to the adoption of the minutes of the last meeting, but the minutes were adopted. Prof. Daniel De Leon then moved the adoption of a resolution in which it was stated that the decision of the County General Committee, excluding the Socialists from membership in the United Labor Party was unjust and unconstitutional. De Leon declared that the action of the Central General Committee was shameful, hypocritical and dishonorable, and if redress was not immediately to follow, it would prove a death blow to the party of United Labor. Matthew Barr spoke against the resolutions with great fervor, moving to lay them upon the table. His motion was rejected by a vote of sixty-one against twenty-two.

Norris Walsh, and Oldenbush having made short speeches, the resolutions were adopted by a vote of sixty-two against five. Herman Strelitz moved the adoption of a protest similar to the one adopted by the 8th Assembly District Organization. Oldenbush offered an amendment, instructing the entire delegation of the district to vote for a reconsideration of the anti-Socialist decision, and asking for a special meeting of the County Committee to be called before August 17. The motion was amended and adopted by a large majority.²⁴

23d Assembly District. Henry George's residence. C. F. Doody, chairman; delegates: Henry George, Fred C. Leubuscher, and Joseph Hess; alternates: A. J. Steers, C. F. Doody, and Jerome O'Neill.

At a meeting on August 8, C. F. Doody presided. When A. J. Steers had made his report regarding the decision of Chairman McMackin against the Socialists, the chairman declared that the decision would be enforced in the 23d Assembly District. The chairman then asked all members of the Socialist Labor Party to retire. A large number of members, mostly German trades unionists, withdrew from the room, declaring that they would join the Socialists.

A motion was then made to expel the members of the Central Labor Union and the Knights of Labor from the United Labor Party because both named organizations had a Socialistic plank in their platforms and had nominated candidates for public office, being political organizations in the same sense as the Socialist Labor Party. The

²³ *Leader*, Aug. 9, 1887, p. 2.

²⁴ *Leader*, Aug. 10, 1887, p. 2.

chairman declared this motion out of order because the named organizations were not political.

Another motion was made to exclude the members of all Land and Labor Clubs, as they came also under Section 2, Art. I of the constitution. The chairman decided that it was superfluous to debate the question. A third motion to exclude the members of the Free Soil Club was also declared out of order. Mr. Joseph Hess resigned as delegate to the Syracuse convention.²⁵

These motions were apparently introduced to ridicule the ruling of McMackin. At the final meeting before the state convention, a committee from the 32d Election District headed by Baldwin, and representing a large body of German brewers, presented a protest against the action of the Central General Committee in ousting the members of the Socialist Labor Party from the United Labor Party and asking the Assistant District Organizer to instruct its delegates to move for a reconsideration of the matter at the next meeting of the County General Committee. The protest declared that if the committee's action was not reviewed the 32d Election District Organization would refuse to pay dues, and would not take any active part in the party. This caused a very warm and exciting debate, in which some very bitter speeches were made by the opposing persons.²⁶

The motion was voted down. Wilbur O. Eastlake was then unanimously elected in the place of Joseph Hess, a delegate who had resigned.

24th Assembly District. Organized labor has a large membership of all nationalities in the assembly district. The sentiment in favor of independent political action is equally strong among the Knights of Labor and the trade unionists. In the last campaign the most perfect harmony prevailed and since then nothing has occurred to disturb the feeling of mutual confidence which is so necessary to effective cooperation in politics. "By keeping in view such practical questions," continued Lucian Sanial in his report to the County General Committee, to which he was a delegate from the 24th Assembly District organization, "as the wage-system and the monopolization of the machinery of industry, through the study of which labor has been brought to its present efficiency of organization, and from which it has evolved the theory of self-emancipation, undoubtedly correct, the state convention may aid us considerably in preserving harmony."²⁷

W. B. Ahrens was elected as chairman. Delegates: L. Sanial, Louis Berlyn, and Charles F. Helley; alternates: C. G. Graves, J. Frank and L. Stumpf.

At a meeting on August 11 the delegates were instructed to sup-

²⁵ *Leader*, Aug. 9, 1887, p. 2; *Standard*, Aug. 13, 1887, p. 1.

²⁶ *Leader*, Aug. 16, 1887, p. 2, col. 4.

²⁷ *Leader*, July 2, 1887, p. 2.

port the Clarendon Hall Platform.²⁸ At a final meeting before the state convention on August 16, a report of the action of the County General Committee was made, at the conclusion of which Lucian Sanial moved not to accept the part relating to the expulsion of the members of the Socialist Labor Party. Pollach stated that he was opposed to the Socialists gathering in special meetings in order to adjust matters pertaining to the United Labor Party among themselves, but he was also opposed to the exclusion of the Socialists as in that case a great many members of their clubs would, as a matter of consistency, have to be excluded.

Franz Leib reported that John McMackin had always declared the credentials of the speakers to be in order, well knowing he was a member of the Socialist Labor Party, and had even ordered him to organize the district. The Socialists had been faithful workers at the polls and the most regular payers of dues, and no one had ever objected to them taking the greatest burden in the movement upon their shoulders.

A motion was made and carried to instruct the delegates of the 24th Assembly District to the County General Committee to act as a unit in demanding the reconsideration of the ruling of McMackin.²⁹

DELEGATES FROM THE KING'S COUNTY

- 1st. Assembly District: Martin Fallon, L. Flynn, and M. Denehy.
- 2nd. A. B. Brown, Alvin T. Walsh and Arthur Stafford. Alternates: Henry Lachmans, W. H. Dunard and C. E. Lee.
- 3rd. John D. Muir, James W. Webb and James Muhlstein. Alternates: Theodore Schmidt, W. J. O'Keefe and William McDonald.
- 4th. John V. Brown, Thomas M. Russell and Michael Jennings. Alternates: John Wallace, Michael Griffin and Edgar Cullen.
- 5th. August Pettinkoffer, J. M. Stanley and W. H. Russell. Alternates: John L. Malone, Robert Busby and Philip Gerhold.
- 6th. Joseph Warwick, W. G. Burke and Killan Van Lutz. Alternates: Charles Stoetzer, Thomas W. Brophy and John B. Hayes.
- 7th. James Bell, Jacob Kohlmeyer and Henry Beinheur. Alternates: John Kitchner, M. Seigel and Paul Josephs.
- 8th. George Smith, A. Pettinkoffer and J. Franz. Alternates: M. Kaiser, P. McCue and D. McIntyre.
- 9th. E. J. Murphy, J. Quigley and R. Anderson. Alternates: R. H. Elias, F. W. Abbott and Peter Hannigan.
- 10th. P. D. Murray, V. A. Wilder and Charles Schalteuback. Alternates: A. V. Brown, Thomas Seward and James Waters.

²⁸ *Standard*, Aug. 20, 1887, p. 2.

²⁹ *Leader*, Aug. 17, 1887, p. 2.

11th. Gaybert Barnes, E. Ferguson and J. B. Kohler. Alternatives: John F. Luttrell, C. H. Matchett and Arthur Stafford.

12th. William Daumar, Andrew D. Best and John R. O'Donnell. Alternates: P. Constant, Michael Clark and Ed. J. Finley.

DELEGATES FROM OTHER COUNTIES

Richmond County: D. W. Clegg, Charles Koffer and W. E. Simkins. Alternates: William J. Correy, John H. Schilling and B. J. Clarke.

Albany County: John McCabe, C. H. Barrett, August Kessler.

Orange County: Land and Labor Club No. 3. Stephen Wolf. Alternates: C. M. Winchester, Port Jervis, C. N. Dedrick.

Onondaga County: William D. Lippelt, William Joyce and Carl Ipson. Alternates: August Heins, Fred Fiji and H. C. Kinman. 2nd. J. Steinmetz, J. A. Millen and Patrick Lawler. Alternates: Terrence O'Brien, Frank R. Skinner and John Dolan. 3rd. John Seitz, Evan J. Evans and John W. Eller. Alternates: John J. Jackson, Henry Dana, and Charles Morgan.

Cayuga County: 1st. R. G. Parker, H. W. Beredict and John Nolan. Alternates: John Enlaw, John Mahr and Conrad English. 2nd. Herbert Pontain, A. McDonnough, and James Bowen. Alternates: E. W. Serring, F. Lill and P. Dougherty.

Westchester County: New Rochelle Land and Labor Club: George Craft. Yonkers—Alexander S. Sutherland, Thomas J. Devine and Dennis Nierney. Alternates: George F. Bedder, Jacob Williams and John P. McCarthy.

Erie County: 3rd. R. H. Ferguson, E. L. Altern, C. M. Kinskey, J. W. O'Neil and Oscar Carlson.

Elmira County: Rufus B. Wilson.

Ellenville: James P. Archibald, John J. Bealin.

Buffalo: Richard J. Hinton.

Albany: Louis F. Post.³⁰

³⁰ *Leader*, August 16, 1887. p. 1.

APPENDIX V*

The resolution adopted by a mass meeting called by the Socialists on August 22, 1887, at the Cooper Union Hall.

"Whereas, At the State Convention held in Syracuse by Henry George and his friends in the name of United Labor, admittance was denied to the regularly elected representatives of large constituencies, composed of wage-workers, while lawyers, politicians, landlords and capitalists were fraudulently recognized as Labor delegates, their only title as such resting on their subserviency to the new political machine; and,

"Whereas, The said Convention, thus exclusively organized for the propagation of Henry George's theory and the political preferment of his henchmen, has presumed to issue in the name of United Labor, a platform that repudiates the tendencies and aspirations of the working classes throughout the civilized world, and,

"Whereas, This platform is a substantial indorsement of Henry George's monstrous assumption in the fact of history and present conditions that 'There is no antagonism, between Capital and Labor,' thereby meaning the capitalist and the laborer, and,

"Whereas, Consistently with this false premise Henry George, sustained by his convention, not only proclaims the natural justice, necessity and eternity of wage-slavery, but actually proposes to make the capitalist richer by exempting his possessions and profits from all public burdens, while wrongfully assuming that a simple Land Tax and absolute Free Trade must prove a cure-all for the stupendous evils of our perverse economic system, and

"Whereas, The ticket nominated by the said convention is an additional insult to the intelligence and feeling of the wage-earning class, which was entirely ignored by the state workers of the Syracuse machine, therefore, be it

"Resolved, That we, workingmen of this city, in mass-meeting assembled, repudiate Henry George, his platform and his personal political machine, that we denounce his pandering to the hatreds and prejudices of the capitalistic class in attempting to cast odium on that earnest body of wage-workers and advanced thinkers who for fifty years have fought the battles of humanity and progress on two continents, that we call upon Organized Labor throughout the country to

* Chap. IX, note 18.

rescue the labor movement from the bossism of an ungrateful and narrow-minded theorist, whose past professions are plainly belied by his recent declarations and conduct. That until a new party is formed, truly representative of the ultimate aims and present requirements of Labor, i. e., securing in practical measures the immediate improvement of its condition, while keeping in view the abolition of the wage system and the substitution therefor of Cooperative Industry—we pledge ourselves to stand united against the political parties, including the George machine.

“Resolved, That we call upon all Assistant District Organizations opposed to the Henry George ring within the United Labor Party to each elect three delegates to a conference to be held on Sunday, September 4, 1887, 9 A. M. at Webster Hall, East 11th between 3rd and 4th Ave., and in other districts we request all members similarly inclined to organize district leagues and likewise elect such delegates, and, further, we call upon all trade and labor organizations to each elect three delegates for such conference.”¹

¹ *Leader*, Aug. 23, 1887, p. 1.

APPENDIX VI*

THE PLATFORM OF THE PROGRESSIVE LABOR PARTY, 1887.

"Whereas, Realizing the necessity of constant vigilance and united action, the various Trade organizations of the city of New York have established a representative body known as the Central Labor Union; and

"Whereas, Their declared purpose, in so doing, was to assist each other in all struggles, political and *industrial*, against encroachments of a capitalistic oligarchy, hostile to Labor and destructive of American liberty, and

"Whereas, We hold within the Central Labor Union:

"1. That the soil of every country is the social and common inheritance of the people.

"2. That Labor produces all wealth, which includes the instruments through which alone the forces of nature become accessible.

"3. That all should, therefore have free access to land and to the instruments of production, without tribute to landlords and monopolies.

"4. That there can be no harmony between Capital and Labor under the present industrial system, which either dwarfs or suppresses individual development by denying to the masses of American people their inalienable right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

"5. That the emancipation of the working classes must be achieved by the working classes themselves through the establishment, as demanded by the Knights of Labor of cooperative institutions, such as will tend to supersede the wage system by the introduction of a co-operative industrial system, and

"Whereas, The Central Labor Union, in pursuance of its object, has on several occasions, and notably last year entered the political field; but

"Whereas, the political agency of its own creation has been perverted in its arms, adulterated in its composition, and converted into a despotic wing by the very candidate whom it had most honored and trusted; therefore, be it

"Resolved, That we representatives of Organized Labor in convention assembled re-affirm the platforms of the Central Labor Union and the Knights of Labor.

* Chap. IX, note 28.

"Resolved, That for the furtherance of the great American movement of the masses against the classes upon its natural lines, we constitute ourselves into an independent political body, under the name of 'Progressive Labor Party,' to be primarily and permanently controlled by the bona fide labor organizations, wage-workers and producers, of the city, of the State and of the United States, through their accredited representatives.

"Resolved, That with a view to the immediate relief of the people by the correction of glaring abuses and the suppression of the odious wrongs, we first demand:

"That eight hours constitute a day's work.

"Prohibition of child labor in all occupations.

"Prohibition of female labor in occupations detrimental to health or morality.

"Equal pay to both sexes for equal work.

"Payment of wages weekly, in lawful money, and no more 'truck' pay.

"First lien for workingmen's wages.

"The enactment of juster laws for the liability of employers to employees.

"Abolition of the contract system in prisons and on public works.

"Sweeping reform of the tenement-house system.

"Abolition of the tenement-house cigarmaking and of all other tenement-house manufacturing.

"Sanitary inspection of mines, factories, dwellings, and all conditions of labor.

"Rigid enforcement of the law prohibiting the importation of foreign labor under contract.

"Rigid enforcement of all existing beneficial labor laws.

"Equal adult citizenship and suffrage, without regard to sex.

"Repeal of all blue laws.

"Repeal of all conspiracy laws, tramp laws and all class legislation and privileges.

"No Pinkertons; no armed bandits in the pay of capital.

"Resolved, That with a view to progressive advance in the direction marked out by the above declaration of principles, we furthermore demand:

"The public ownership and management of railroads, telegraphs, express and steamship lines, telephones, gas and water works, and all industries involving the use of public franchises, or the performance of public functions.

"The direct issue of currency and money by the national treasury, without the intervention of banks.

"And as a first step to the recovery of the national domain of the

people, we favor a special tax on unimproved land, sufficiently high to compel its improvement or its surrender to the community by the speculators who withhold it from use.

"We favor also a tax on all incomes, so graduated as to bear most heavily upon the great incomes of the monopolistic classes and corporations, and thus materially lighten the burdens now borne by the workers, producers and masses of the people.

"With the same end in view, we also favor the exemption from taxation of the average homesteads, farms, manufacturies, working-tools and properties under \$5,000 in value occupied or productively used by the owners, and not rented out."¹

¹ *Leader*, Sept. 9, 1887, p. 1.

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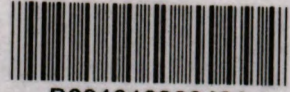
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