

JOSEPH FELS FUND BULLETIN

BLYMYER BUILDING

Monthly Information for Contributors to THE FELS FUND and Single Taxers Generally

PUBLISHED BY JOSEPH FELS FUND COMMISSION

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ELECTION NEWS.

The most important election news is usually withheld to the last. This is the result on measures referred to the people. These enable us to accurately gauge what progress we have made. Full returns are not yet in. But results as far as known of special interest to Single Taxers, may be given.

California.

Indications are that the home rule in taxation amendment has failed to carry, although it is still possible that later returns may change this. On other taxation amendments the verdict seems to be on the right side. Amendments have been adopted abolishing the poll tax, and requiring municipalities owning property outside of their jurisdiction to pay taxes on their land values, but not on improvements. The latter applies to the cities of San Francisco and Los Angeles, which secure their water supply from distant points, own considerable land in outside counties, and have disputed the payment of taxes thereon. Defeated was a reactionary measure to disqualify all voters not property owners from participating in elections on bond issues.

North Dakota.

North Dakota adopted an amendment to allow classification of property for taxation.

Missouri.

Missouri overwhelmingly defeated the so-called Anti-Single Tax amendment. This was directed not only at the Single Tax but at the Initiative and Referendum as well. Had it been adopted it would have put in the Constitution an unrepeatable provision empowering any incompetent, lazy, careless or dishonest county clerk or county judge to keep any initiative measure off of the ballot. The success which the monopolistic interests of the State had in 1912, in fooling the farmers regarding the Single Tax, encouraged them to attempt to deceive them again. However, "you can not fool all of the people all of the time." The National Popular Government League distributed over the State a speech by Senator Owen, of Oklahoma, which exposed the trick.

Ohio.

It will take some time to finish counting the votes cast against the plutocratic taxation proposal initiated by Ohio's State Board of Commerce. It is beat by at least 300,000. The State Board of Commerce, thought it could get the farmers to support it by telling them that "it will make the Single Tax impossible." The voters either did not believe it or do not want the Single Tax made impossible. In either case they are right. The amendment would not have made the Single Tax impossible, and if it had, that would have been an additional reason for defeating it.

Oregon.

All taxation measures were defeated in Oregon, good, bad and indifferent, but no figures are at hand to show to what extent voters discriminated.

New York.

The Lower Rent Society has been conducting a campaign to secure a referendum vote on untaxing of improvements in New York City. This is opposed by the Allied Real Estate Interests and other monopolistic interests. These object even to an expression of opinion on the part of the people as to what shall be done with the values that they create. The Lower Rent Society questioned each candidate for Governor before election as to whether he would veto a bill permitting a referendum vote should it pass the Legislature. The reply of Governor-elect Whitman is interesting and important, as follows:

In reply to your letter of September 1st, let me say that, should I be elected Governor, and should the Legislature pass a bill submitting to a local referendum the question of gradually reducing the tax rate on buildings in New York City to 1 per cent of the tax rate on land, I, as Governor, would do nothing to interfere with such a referendum.

It is due to two of the other candidates, ex-Governor Sulzer and Mr. Frederick Davenport, to say that they emphatically endorsed the object of the Lower Rent Society. Only Governor Glynn refused to commit himself.

The comment on the result is consequently interesting, made by Mr. Frederick C. Leubuscher,

RENEWALS.

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president of the Lower Rent Society, published in its organ, *The Tenants' Weekly*:

Mr. Whitman's vote shows that the people of New York State appreciate a candidate who says unequivocally that, as Governor, he will not interfere with referendum home rule in taxation. The strenuous efforts of the Allied Real Estate Interests to defeat Mr. Whitman were adequately rebuked by the believers in fundamental democracy. Ten militant Senators and Assemblymen, who favor the referendum on untaxing buildings in New York City, were elected from New York City—and as many more who favor the principle. Mr. S. Clinton Crane, Republican candidate for Assembly from the Twenty-third New York District, whom the Society to Lower Rents and Reduce Taxes on Homes opposed, because he has bitterly opposed this referendum, was defeated decisively. Mr. A. Ellenbogen, Republican candidate for the Assembly from the Fifteenth New York District, against whom the society conducted a campaign, barely got elected, through the eleventh hour admission made for him by the Allied Real Estate Interests, that he was neither in favor of nor opposed to the referendum sought by the society. He ran about five hundred votes behind the head of his ticket. Mr. Ogden L. Mills, whom the society also opposed because of his opposition to the rule of the people, was elected Senator, but polled less than half of Mr. Whitman's vote in his district. Without the endorsement of the Progressive party, Mr. Mills would probably have been badly defeated. As the Republican party is now in complete control of the State Government, they will have to face squarely the responsibility for defeating the home rule referendum on taxation.

Other States.

Measures of interest to Single Taxers were voted on in several other States, but definite news concerning these has not yet come to hand.

Summary.

The general result shows a drift of public sentiment away from the general property tax, a very favorable sign. The results in Ohio and Missouri may reasonably be interpreted as an indication of distrust of the plutocratic elements in the habit of appealing to ignorance and prejudice concerning the Single Tax, to further their own interests. Not only has this demagogic trick been properly rebuked, but there must necessarily be a lessening of hostility toward the Single Tax where such feeling has heretofore prevailed. The stupid blundering of our opponents has helped to bring this about.

AN ANTI'S ILL-CONSIDERED ASSERTIONS.

The brewers are in favor of the Single Tax.
* * * They have far more in beer, brewery buildings and machinery than in land. In the long run the Single Tax would mean millions to them.—Kansas City Citizen (monopoly organ).

A typical specimen of Anti-Single Tax campaigning is the above obvious attempt to arouse prohibition prejudice, regardless of truth. But let us take another view of the statement: It is either true or not true. If true it applies to all manufacturers and business men just as

it does to brewers. The Single Tax must necessarily affect the same way as one of the Citizen's brewers, shoe manufacturers, who have far more in shoes, shoe factory buildings and machinery than land, or any other manufacturer who happens to be in the same condition. In the long run the Single Tax would mean millions to them. Consequently the Single Tax would stimulate and encourage all kinds of wealth production. It would be as good a thing to the working farmer, who is more interested in improvements, agricultural machinery, crops, live stock and labor products generally than in land speculation, and who is interested in the purchasing power of the consumers of his products. It would be a good thing for all workers to have opportunities for employment thus increased. It would not be so good a thing for the man who now profits by blocking industry until he gets a high price for getting out of its way. But he can be spared very easily. All this necessarily follows from the Citizen's assertion, provided it is true.

If it is not true, then the Citizen stands convicted of deliberate misrepresentation.

It is up to the Citizen to say which it is.

BUSINESS CONDITIONS IN WESTERN CANADA.

In spite of prevailing industrial depression, the cities and towns in Western Canada, which exempt improvements and personal property from local taxation, far exceeded in building activities during the year 1913 cities and towns of California of the same size and even some of larger size. Victoria, British Columbia, had nearly twice the operations of Berkeley, California. New Westminster exceeded Bakersfield, California, a larger city, and Stockton, a place twice its size. Edmonton, Alberta, did more building than Oakland, California, a place two and one-half times as big. Vancouver has not as many people as Sacramento, Berkeley and Fresno combined, but it exceeded this combination by about 40 per cent in building operations.

PORTO RICO'S TROUBLES LIKE OURS.

Porto Rico must be enjoying the same kind of prosperity that exists in all places blessed by land monopoly. The Free Federation of Workingmen of Porto Rico recently presented a complaint to Governor Yager, as follows:

The workers on farms and the small land-holders work and devote all their efforts to create the wealth of the country. They are the ones who give to land the value it has. And yet the land and its values belong to or are monopolized by a few business men, bankers, usurers and individuals who live on their rents. Some of these people reside in the country only temporarily. Others have never even seen Porto Rico. In the meantime the real agricultural and working people in Porto Rico drag a most unhappy existence.

There were more complaints also. Governor Yager seems to be puzzled. He sees that something is wrong, but he is apparently all at sea

as to what to do about it. A copy of Progress and Poverty would enlighten him.

ALASKA'S GOOD FORTUNE.

An encouraging step in advance was the passage by Congress of the Alaska coal land leasing bill. If properly administered that law will ensure to the people of Alaska the values they create, as far as coal lands are concerned. Furthermore, there will be no coal monopoly in Alaska to extort unreasonable prices from coal consumers, and no labor troubles, such as have disgraced Colorado, West Virginia, Pennsylvania and other monopoly-cursed sections. Alaska is in luck.

THE TROUBLE WITH THE INCOME TAX.

The Income Tax is proving a disappointment to the Government. There are too many dodging it, is the claim. That is probable enough. **Some people earn their incomes, and having given value received for them, are unable to see where in the Government is entitled to any share. Others do not earn their incomes, and do not see why a Government easy enough to let them take what belongs to others, should expect them to make honest returns. All this trouble might have been avoided by levying taxes at the true source—on land values. That would have taxed none but unearned incomes and the tax could not have been evaded. Unearned incomes derived from other sources than land values are the result of Government-granted privileges. The abolition of these privileges will abolish such incomes.**

LABOR AND THE LAND QUESTION.

Land monopoly is at the bottom of labor troubles in Colorado, West Virginia and Michigan, as it is every where else. Note what the Executive Committee of the American Federation of Labor has to report on it in opening the National Convention on November 9, at Philadelphia:

Land-holding conditions involved in some mining districts have enabled the operators to establish what amounts to a feudal operating system for the mines.

They own vast tracts of land, hundreds and even thousands of square miles in extent, on which the mines are located.

The mining companies own and therefore control all roads that traverse the land. They own the houses in which the miners live; the villages made up of these miners, the school houses to which their children must go for mental training, the churches which minister to their spiritual needs, the stores from which they buy their clothing, food and other necessities, the postoffices where they get their mail, money orders, and conduct their crude banking transactions.

Every detail of mining life is under the supervision of the mine operators through their power of ownership.

In time of strike the mine operators have the power of eviction and have forced hundreds of strikers and their families to seek shelter in tent colonies, with the consequent danger of

exposure. There can be no real freedom under such conditions of industrial tyranny.

In addition to the problems arising from the feudal ownership of land, the mine operators have assumed police power. They employ armed mine guards to maintain their regulations and to guard mine property.

In times of industrial peace the mine guards serve as police and prevent "undesirable" persons from trespassing on the land of the mining companies.

The elastic term, "trespass," has been interpreted to mean all manner of organizing activities.

Need more be said to show the need of abolishing land monopoly?

SINGLE TAXERS IN CONGRESS.

Many members of the present Congress who had been renominated were defeated for re-election. But every Single Tax member who was nominated was re-elected. Warren Worth Bailey, Robert Crosser, David Lewis, Edward Keating, William Kent, John I. Nolan, Frank Buchanan, William Gordon and others return to continue in the next Congress the fight for social justice they made so well in the last. It is regrettable that illness prevented Henry George, Jr. from making another campaign, so that he too might have been with the others, as he certainly would have been, had not unfortunate circumstances stopped him. **The elections have shown that the radical not afraid of his principles, and able to logically defend them, is one whom the voters will trust.**

ALBERTA PROGRESSING.

The rate of taxation under Alberta's new Wild Lands' Tax Act, has been fixed at ten mills on the dollar. The valuation of the lands will be made by government officials. The total acreage in the province to which this bill will apply is roughly estimated at 15,000,000 acres. The valuation is expected to average \$10 per acre, and if these figures are correct, the revenue derived will approach \$1,500,000. The act will come into force next year.

There are three principal exemptions including land owned by a bona fide resident farmer to the extent of 640 acres, any part of which may be situated within nine miles from his home; land owned by non-residents must have a quarter of its area under cultivation; all inclosed land which has been used for pasturing purposes must have one horse or cattle and three sheep for every ten acres.

The act is in the nature of a war measure as well as being designed to serve the purpose of securing the release of farm lands from the hands of speculators and permitting its development. —Grain Growers' Guide (Winnipeg).

Hickery, dickery, dock;
Land values ran up the clock,
There was room for but one,
So down wages run—
Hickery, dickery, dock.

—CRAIG RALSTON.

THE NEXT BATTLE.

The next fight takes place in Colorado. Denver and Colorado Springs will both vote this coming spring, under the home rule right enjoyed by Colorado cities, on adoption of municipal Single Tax.

INTERESTING, EVEN IF NOT TRUE.

An interesting publication is "The Citizen," of Kansas City, Missouri, edited and published by Judge W. H. Wallace, land monopolist and anti-single taxer. The October number is especially interesting since it contains considerable evidence of falsity of statements about the Single Tax made by Judge Wallace and his co-workers. For instance, the Judge has been saying that "*under the Single Tax the general condition would be as it was with the Indians when they roamed hither and thither and pitched their wigwams on our prairies and in our forests.*" He has also said: "*The brewers are in favor of the Single Tax. They have far more in beer, brewery buildings and machinery than in land.*" In the October issue he has so far forgotten himself as to put in both of these statements, thus giving his readers to understand that the brewers are in favor of a system that will not permit them to maintain brewery buildings, but will force them to "roam hither and thither," with no other place to put their expensive machinery than wigwams, and with no other possible customers than people in the condition of savage Indians. If Judge Wallace is right there must be something wrong with the business sense of these brewers. But, of course, both statements are but examples of the barefaced misrepresentations which plunderbund representatives in Missouri have spread concerning the Single Tax.

Another unintentional confession is this: "The provision in Amendment No. 1 [the anti-single tax amendment rejected by the people] is copied from the new constitution recently adopted in Ohio. Since there is no such provision in the Ohio constitution, it could not have been copied from it. The Ohio constitution does not forbid the use of the constitutional initiative for any kind of law—Single Tax or anything else. As a lawyer, Judge Wallace must have known that the inhibition in the Ohio constitution does not apply to constitutional amendments but only to ordinary statute laws.

A confession of solicitude for the interest of land speculators is implied in this statement: "The constant agitation of this heresy [the Single Tax] **decreases the value of your land.**" Elsewhere the Judge utters some beautiful sentiments concerning the home and how desirable it is for every one to have one; yet he objects even to an agitation that he admits is making it easier for home-seekers to buy sites for homes, and is keeping down rents for tenants.

Still another interesting feature is the Judge's attempt to exculpate both the Land Owners' Protective Association and himself for attacking the initiative and referendum in 1912. But actions

speak louder than words. Senator Owen has shown how friendly the author of the anti-single tax amendment must be to the I. and R.

There are other matters of interest of which these are but samples.

A GOOD EXAMPLE.

Indianapolis, Ind., Oct. 10, 1914.

Have just received a pamphlet from the Land Value Committee of England. It occurs to me that if our English brothers, in the midst of war, at a time when their homes are threatened by invasion, keep up their activities for the Single Tax cause, we, here in America ought to be ashamed of ourselves. The only way to win is to keep everlastingly at it. No one knows what a little effort may lead to. On receiving this pamphlet from across the sea, I sat down and wrote two Single Tax letters to newspapers, and am reminded to remember the Public.

Yours,
J. H. SPRINGER.

1104 Prospect Street.

SINGLE TAX ENDOWMENT.

Inquiries have come concerning the Single Tax Endowment Association, which show that we have some workers who intend to keep on working with us even after they have passed away. It is a good thing for all Single Taxers who feel that they will leave more than their families actually need to inform themselves concerning this before making their wills.

STATEMENT OF THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, ETC.

Of The Joseph Fels Fund Bulletin, published monthly at Cincinnati, Ohio, required by the Act of August 24, 1912:

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Known bondholders, mortgagees and other security holders, holding 1 per cent or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages, or other securities: None.

DANIEL KIEFER.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 29th day of September, 1914.

CHAS. W. SPICER, Notary Public.

[SEAL] (My commission expires January 27, 1915.)

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