

on land values, but not a large proportion. Of this 64 per cent. it is safe to say that not more than half is drawn from land values, so that it would be nearer the truth to put the amount of the revenue derived from land values by State and local taxation at not to exceed one-third of the total revenue.

It is true that in cities sometimes more than half the revenue is derived from land values; this is true in the City of New York. But the amount in New York is only about two-thirds, whereas in the rural districts of New York the amount derived from land values is very much less in proportion.

In 1897 the United States Department of Agriculture published Circular No. 5, "Local Taxation as Affecting Farms." Most of the statistics were gathered by George B. Rounsevell and Edgar L. Ryder, both exceptionally intelligent men and Single Taxers. The conclusion arrived at in that report was that the unimproved value of farms is less than 40 per cent. of the improved value. In several counties of the State of New York, upon which reports were made, land values were less than 82 per cent. of the real and personal property assessed. In view of the fact that vacant land is notoriously under-assessed it is evident that Mr. Buell's statement of the proportion of tax paid on land values in the United States is fully twice the amount actually paid.

Mr. Buell says that in many States no constitutional change is needed to put the Single Tax in operation. There are only eight States which have constitutions that will permit all taxes to be levied upon land values, and in some of those States there are constitutional provisions limiting the rate of taxation which would prove serious obstacles. There are about twenty-five States in which the constitution requires the equal taxation of all property.

Mr. Buell says "When the States shall have made the changes necessary Congress may avail itself of that provision of the national constitution which provides for the apportioning of direct taxes among the States according to population." He argues that this would be fair because land values are proportionate to population. This is an old fallacy that has been put forth by distinguished Single Taxers, but has frequently been exposed. Land values are not in proportion to population: they are in proportion to the productive power of population. This includes three factors: The number of people, the intelligence and energy of the people, and the situation, fertility or mineral richness of the land. If federal taxes were apportioned according to population some poor States would have to pay to the support of the United States an amount equal to their entire land values and they would have nothing left for local expenses.

I will make a few comparisons between poor states and rich States based on the

census of 1890 which I think will show the gross injustice of apportioning federal taxes in proportion to population.

The wealth per capita in Rhode Island was \$1,459; in Montana \$3,429; in North Carolina \$361 and in South Carolina \$348. The cost per capita for State and local government was in Rhode Island \$16.50, in Montana \$20.61, in North Carolina \$1.99 and in South Carolina \$2.69.

If federal revenue were raised by a tax on land values South Carolina would have paid \$1,725,000. If it had been apportioned per capita it would have paid \$5,250,000, while the total cost of supporting the State and local governments in South Carolina was only a trifle over \$3,000,000. Now reverse the proposition. If Nevada had paid its proportion of federal revenue based on land values it would have paid \$778,391; if it had paid per capita the amount would have been \$208,670.

These comparisons can be made to the same effect between all the Southern States and the Central and Northwestern States. The cause is evident. The population of Rhode Island is compact, intelligent and industrious. Rhode Island is favorably situated to supply the markets of the world. The productive power of the people is naturally very high. In North and South Carolina a large proportion of the population is colored, ignorant, shiftless. The productive power of the people is low. In Montana and Nevada the mineral wealth is enormous. The productive power of the people is very great, and land values very high.

LAWSON PURDY.

#### REPLY BY MR. BUELL.

*Editor Single Tax Review:*

I. As to the percentage of state and local revenue actually raised from the value of land, I can speak positively only for Minnesota. In this State land is assessed separately from all other values, and always has been, and the reports of our State auditor each year will furnish the data from which the exact percentage can be obtained. For many years about two-thirds of all State and local revenue has been raised from the assessed value of land. In some rural counties, over three-fourths of the local revenue is collected from land values. This is no accident, but is the result of a deliberate policy on the part of local auditors and assessors.

II. The only other point that I care to discuss is the question of the fairness of apportioning federal taxes among the States on the basis of population. Of course my supposition is that the State would raise its share of the federal revenue as well as its local revenue by assessing land values alone. Permit me to call attention again to the fact that it does not follow that the people who live in a State would actually

pay all the federal taxes apportioned to that state on the basis of population. In all states a great amount of land is owned by non-residents, and it is the owner of land that must pay the land value tax—no matter where he might live.

Of course if a State had great land value—due to rich mines or other cause and a sparse population—its share of federal taxes would be too small. But the general adoption of the Single Tax would tend to rapidly redistribute population so that the most dense population would be located on the land that might be most valuable naturally. To me it seems plain that if men were once free to locate on any land they might choose they would choose the land most naturally *productive*. Then the most valuable land would have the people and unoccupied land would be valueless land.

I thank you for the courtesy of sending Mr. Purdy's article to me, but do not think it necessary to consider any of the other points raised.

C. J. BUELL.

Minneapolis, Minn.

#### TOUR OF JOHN Z. WHITE.

Arrived at Portland, Oregon, on July 11. Several good meetings were held at this point, the first being before the Young Democratic Club, at which a good degree of interest was developed. No great opposition was shown, but the customary confusion in relation to economic law was revealed by the questions asked. Quite a number, however, proved to be familiar with fundamental social forces.

A most excellent meeting was held at the Y. M. C. A. rooms. The young men were evidently much interested, as were also the older ones. The whole association at Portland is exerting a broad and liberal humanitarian influence that will be greatly helpful to all movements for the betterment of social life. The fact that men must form an association distinct from their individual enterprises is clearly recognized. That this association is natural and therefore subject to natural law, is likewise perceived. The good will of the audience was plainly with the speaker. The manifestation of a feeling of strangeness toward the Single Tax is rapidly disappearing.

A number of the young men of the Y. M. C. A. gathered on another day for the purpose of questioning the Single Tax advocate, and for an hour the queries were advanced and met. One of the number was sure the landlord would raise rent if taxes were laid wholly on him. As the group broke up, another who had grasped the true relation was "explaining" to the benighted one.

A debate was held with Mr. Lewis, a socialist. He thought that in the act of

paying wages the robbery of labor is performed. Of course the Single Taxer thought if there were robbery, it must be in not paying wages. The historical class struggle was asserted by Mr. Lewis. He claimed that as the capitalistic class had overthrown the old land owning class, so must the working class overthrow the present capitalistic class. In opposition it was held that the land owning class had not been overthrown. In fact, land owners are the barriers to social equity now, and maintain their power through the agency of a bad system of taxation. Mr. Lewis was as careless regarding the consistency of his statements as the ordinary politician. He assured the audience that machinery overshadowed land in productive importance; that labor is a commodity; that a railroad right of way is valuable because of the track; that the logic of the Single Tax is perfect, but that we are in error as to facts; that his idea of land values was hazy; that George was a poor reasoner, and that workmen in the socialist party do not care for the Single Tax. All of which was repeated by the Single Taxer for the benefit of the audience. Lewis was surprised to learn that railroad equipment does not cost over \$25,000 per mile, while the privileged value is over \$35,000. The socialists in the audience seemed astonished at the fact that the land of Manhattan Island, exclusive of property exempt from taxation, is worth twice as much as the improvements upon it. Think of a man saying machinery, which we can reproduce, is more important than land, which we cannot make at all.

A good meeting was held at a free lecture and reading room society. It was well attended, and the speaker took occasion to state with more than usual emphasis the attitude of Single Taxers toward monopolists and their supporters and apologists. Workingmen were bluntly asked if they did not think they were getting their just deserts—considering how they vote? Several socialists expressed their pleasure at the speech, and thereby afforded evidence that they are bent on denunciation rather than construction—like the Irish "patriot" who is much more intent on opposing England than on freeing Ireland. A fact worth mentioning is that the secretary of the Y. M. C. A. is an avowed Single Taxer and acted as chairman of this meeting.

At Seattle, Wash., the first meeting was before the University on the subject, The Doctrines of Henry George, Professor Congdon, registrar, presided. He was very genial and complimentary at the close. The large body of pupils seemed much interested, and vigorously testified their pleasure. Nearly all schools of advanced pupils receive the Single Tax message with high favor.

An afternoon meeting of a woman's club was addressed on "The Sources of Public