

ably the adoption of this plan by any city would powerfully promote its industrial growth by encouraging business enterprises of every kind."

Did not Henry George say the same? The editorials from the *Transcript*, the *Post*, the *Springfield Republican* are all reprinted in this small pamphlet, 10,500 copies of which have been sent out by our League to those who would not believe when Henry George said these things, but who will listen when told these truths by well-known conservative men and leading newspapers. Does not this fact show the wonderful progress of our movement? Does it not prove the stability of those breastworks that Single Tax men and women have raised against revolution—against the time when monopoly shall have become too lawless and aggressive? These conservative business men, these loyal citizens, will yet flee behind this breastwork of the Single Tax to save themselves from the extremes of Socialism on the one hand or from the despotism of an oligarchy of wealth created by special privilege on the other.

The third important propaganda work which our league has recently done is that of emphasizing some of the reform work that is now being done by our first-class magazines. Use has been made of two articles that have appeared in *McClure's* and *Everybody's*, to point out more emphatically the real cause for the present inequitable distribution of wealth.

We have sent out 9,600 of these magazines to clergymen, college professors and others. Before sending them a printed circular was sent, calling attention to these articles: "The Astor Estate of New York" and "The West Coast Land Grafters," soliciting a thoughtful reading; and to prepare the readers somewhat to accept our view of the intimate relationship which exists between the subject of taxation and that of vast fortunes, the circular ended with Section II, Chapter XIII, of Thomas G. Shearman's "Natural Taxation," in which he says:

"The enormous wealth of British dukes, and of our own—or lately our own—Astors, is of course due entirely to the comparative exemption of ground rent from taxation. But all the excess of wealth gained by railway kings, above a liberal compensation for shrewdness, sagacity and foresight is due to precisely the same cause. It has been shown that the chief value of railways consists in exclusive and peculiar privileges upon land, and the greatest part of this value arises from its comparative exemption from taxation.

"The great monopolies which have grown with such startling rapidity into such overshadowing power, owe all their wealth and power to the manipulation of railways and of duties on imports. Under natural taxation [the Single Tax] there would be no import duties to manipulate, and railways could not afford to be manipulated."

In view of the fact that the two chief

issues in the next Presidential election are likely to be the tariff and the railroad monopoly, this propaganda work now being done by the American Free Trade League seems both timely and important.

ELIZA STOWE TWITCHELL,
Secretary of the Massachusetts
Single Tax League.

WISCONSIN.

SOME NEW TAX LAWS IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION—REAL PROGRESS UNDER THE LATE REPUBLICAN GOVERNOR, LA FOLLETTE, WHO IS MORE DEMOCRATIC THAN THE DEMOCRATS OF WISCONSIN.

The Wisconsin Legislature adjourned ten days ago, after a session of five and one-half months—the longest in the history of the State. This has been popularly pronounced a "good" Legislature, as distinguished from the last two, which were called "bad," the difference being that on bills affecting the interest of the public-service corporations this Legislature on the whole favored the interests of the people, while the former ones tended to favor the interests of the corporations. This seems to be the chief difference the country over between "good" and "bad" Legislatures.

Among the large number of laws passed were several relating to taxation, and these generally pointed in the right direction. The progress of Single Tax principles in Wisconsin is indirect. The economic truths peculiar to the Single Tax philosophy are steadily gaining ground, and are constantly affecting the general scope of legislation; and this, of course, without the knowledge of the legislators.

The taxation of street railways, inter-urban railways and telegraph lines was changed from the present license system to the ad valorem method, to go into effect after two years. The license fees of telephone companies was increased. The State Tax Commission has been reorganized and its powers increased.

The most important act of the Legislature is the creation of the State Railroad Rate Commission. The three commissioners provided for by the law have recently been appointed by the Governor. They are empowered to equalize and fix rates, to prevent rebates and generally to supervise railroad rates in the State.

The Statute of Limitations has been extended in actions by the State against railroad companies for the purpose of recovering back taxes which the companies are said to have been dodging.

The course of legislation was largely shaped by Governor La Follett, supported by the half-breed wing of the Republican party, which is much more Democratic than Republican. The Governor himself, as is well known, was elected to the United States Senate, displacing Senator Quarles, a

pronounced "stand-patter." The Governor, however, refused to go to Washington to take the oath of office until the State Legislature had adjourned, and he finished the work which he had promised the people, and in behalf of which he had asked their support through three campaigns for the governorship. These reforms are: the primary election, that is, the nomination of all officers, state, county, legislative and congressional, by direct vote; the ad-valorem taxation of public-service corporations, and the railroad rate commission, the last of which has just been secured. A law was passed providing for the election of delegates to the national conventions by direct vote. The Governor is also strongly in favor of home rule by cities in municipal affairs and vetoed several bills locally regulating certain matters in the city of Milwaukee. He also presented a strong message to the Legislature urging legislation to restrict the grants of mill-dam and water-power privileges, and to reserve and protect the rights of the public therein. It would be but a step for the Governor to recognize the effective Single-Tax method of doing this, namely, to require as annual payment to the State or to the municipality of the reasonable value of the site, regardless of improvements, or whether it were used or not.

On the whole, Wisconsin is to be congratulated upon the civic progress made in the last few years, and upon its honest and brilliant Governor, who has led in the fight. We hope for much from him when he finally takes his seat in the national Senate. To be sure, he is no Single Taxer, but he does see that the values created by the public should go more largely to the benefit of the public, and thus reduce the burden of taxation upon the people; and that is of the very essence of the Single Tax.

JOHN HARRINGTON.

Oshkosh, Wis.

KANSAS.

THE UP-HILL FIGHT IN THIS STATE—STANDARD OIL KINGS ITS REAL RULERS.—STEALING THE RESOURCES OF AN EMPIRE WITH THE CONNIVANCE OF THE FEDERAL AUTHORITIES.

As predicted in a former article, our state officers are trying to render void the anti-monopoly legislation forced by the people from an unwilling legislature last winter. How completely railroad influence dominates the state officers is seen in the fact in the suits to test the constitutionality of these laws the state was represented by railroad and Standard Oil attorneys. The state officers whose duty it was to select counsel for the people say these lawyers just jumped in and filed the papers before they had time to appoint state counsel, so they had to let it go, and we have the peculiar

spectacle of attorneys representing and paid by the state arguing in the interest of monopolies the state is supposed to be trying to control in the interest of the people and "a square deal."

One thing has been made plain to even the mud-heads in Kansas, and that is that the Standard Oil derives much of its power to rob the people from its control of the iron highways built by land grants, bonuses and subsidies paid for by the people, and that these affiliated monopolies retain their power to oppress the people only by political influence, and this political influence is obtained largely through the use of the money extorted from the people. Railway passes, subsidized or directly owned newspapers, freight rate favors, use of political patronage and influence of Federal officials, appeals to senseless partisanship, free trains to big political rallies with cabinet officers or U. S. Senators as the principal speakers, are some of the means used to obtain votes for "fixed" nominations, all supplemented when necessary by direct or indirect bribery.

The Standard Oil Co. is now offering 25 cts. per barrel for the same crude oil for which it paid \$1.88 to \$1.90 fifteen or eighteen months ago, while the retail price of refined kerosene remains at twenty cents per gallon. During the same time the railway freight rate on crude oil has quadrupled, the effect being to make the Standard the only buyer and seller of oil. Some independent refineries are being built, but they are unable to make freight rate contracts that will enable them to do business, hence the importance of the laws passed last winter to prevent railroad discrimination and extortionate rates. These laws are now tied up by injunctions with the railroad and Standard Oil, attorneys representing both sides of the suits. All these things show how the people are robbed as the result of their own fool voting.

Really, the oil producers are entitled to little sympathy, as they too are trying to get something for nothing, and their demand for Antimonopoly legislation is confined to what will serve their own interests. Nevertheless, the effect of their efforts is in the right direction and is doing much to educate the people. The price of oil producing lands has dropped twenty five to fifty per cent. since the Standard obtained its cinch and some real and many prospective fortunes have melted away or gone into your city at No. 26 Broadway.

The Indian Territory, just south of the Kansas oil fields, is very rich in Petroleum of the highest quality, most of which is under direct control of Standard Oil subsidiary companies, and the independent producers are entirely at its mercy and glad to sell its oil at twenty-five to thirty cents per barrel. The Standard controls all the railways there and freight rates are prohibitive. The action of the Secretary of the Interior in arbitrarily extending for