

000,000 was represented by buildings and £8,500,000 by land or site values; and that to day (in 1902) there was a valuation of probably £27,000,000, of which only £7,000,000, was represented by buildings and £20,000,000 by land or site values. The taxation of site values will, however, soon alter this state of affairs, and break down the monopoly of land, to which alone it can be attributed."

Remarkable as it may seem it is reported that this bill has the approval of Lord Milner.

#### NORTHERN WESTERN TERRITORY.

It may not be generally known that in the North West Territories we have what is called here "the system of land taxation." For road purposes it is a specific tax of \$2½ per ¼ section of land. For school purposes the tax is levied on land according to value, and all improvements and personal property are exempt. This, however, only applies to rural districts; cities and villages may include improvements and personal property.

Ranching and agriculture are the principal occupations of the people, and those that do the pioneering readily support a system of taxation that catches the fellow who expects to profit by their pioneering. The "land tax" gains strength as the people become better acquainted with it. For without any special knowledge of economic problems, they see that it makes the mere land speculators contribute their share towards public expenses; and, at the same time, tends to make land speculation less profitable for them.

The single tax, with all that it implies, is no better understood here than in other localities. But I believe Premier Haultain, of the N. W. T. legislature, to whom we are indebted for the policy of "land taxation," must be much of a single taxer. For two years ago the ordinance, which before was optional, was made mandatory with respect to improvements on land and personal property for school taxes in rural districts.

But our "land tax" has but little effect on land speculation, which is now at fever height. Within the past two years land has more than doubled in price. Railroad lands are sold on the installment plan, and in hundreds of cases three to five dollars an acre have been netted on a single installment. This amounts to quite a sum on a block of half a dozen sections of land. Speculators prefer investing in unimproved land, and in whole sections; it sells better.

The small farmer is fast becoming a thing of the past. The poor man can easily take up a homestead, but when he has got it he finds it of no use to him without capital: he can no longer farm with the "hoe;" and to get the necessary capital means many years of hard toil and stinting. So, as a rule, he takes the quicker method of selling out to a speculator, and moves farther out with his capital to start anew.

In this locality, nine-tenths of the homesteads are for sale, the owners thinking that at present prices the money would be worth more to them than the land; for as yet land rents for scarce anything.

—GEORGE PRICE, Olds, N. W. T.

#### BRITISH COLUMBIA.

The most important political convention ever held in British Columbia has just closed its labours. The call to the convention was issued by the Western Federation of Miners, and responded to by the labour unions, single tax associations and socialistic societies of the Province. As a result of this convention a new party has been formed and a platform of principles adopted. For the last two years the Province of British Columbia has been in the grip of a most incompetent and mercenary set of politicians whose only aim seems to be to sacrifice the natural resources of the Province to the greed of corporations, and to load the people with a debt which in proportion to population would suggest the advisability of repudiation. This condition of affairs was mainly responsible for the calling of the convention, and to that extent has good come out of evil.

There were five pronounced single taxers at the convention, and twelve socialists. The socialists captured the office of temporary chairman while the single taxers devoted their whole energies to the platform. When the report of the committee on platform was presented, Clause 2 read as follows: "The application of a land tax that will discourage large holdings and prevent monopoly." Through the efforts of Alister Thompson, of Kamloops, Robert Macpherson of Vancouver and Alfred Parr of Ymir, this was changed to read as follows: "That we gradually abolish all taxes on the producer and the products of the producer, shifting them on land values;" and, further, this clause was given first place in the platform.

By one stroke the single tax has been placed before the people of British Columbia and must be up for discussion at our next elections.

I enclose you a copy of the platform, and would call your attention to the fact that the only clause dealing with the question of revenue is Clause 1, which reads: "That we gradually abolish all taxes on the producer and the products of the producer, shifting them on land values."

The convention was composed of sixty delegates representing the most radical elements among the trades unionists of the Province. The name of the new party is the Provincial Progressive Party, and the members of the convention separated with the understanding that the new party must "keep in the middle of the road."

—THOMAS HOWELL, Kamloops, B. C.