

There was little interest in the election, the result of which was wholly reactionary. Only about half of the registered voters cast their ballots.

Single Taxers of California are not discouraged. Owing to the small vote for governor it will be easy to secure a place for the amendment on the ballot. It is believed that capable men should be placed on the platform from now until election to thoroughly instruct the voters of the State.

Missouri

THE Single Tax vote in Missouri is not obtainable at the time of going to press, but the result so far as known is, under the circumstances, very gratifying. In 1912 the Single Tax vote in the State was 86,647 in favor to 508,137 against. The indications are that, with the exception of St. Louis, the Single Tax vote has been doubled, and that the opposition has materially diminished.

Single Taxers in Missouri had much to overcome. Julius Mayer, secretary of the State Board of Agriculture, advised the farmers through the *Missouri Clip Sheet*, to vote down the Single Tax. Marion Reedy in the *Mirror*, denounced Mayer for using the State's paper for that purpose and as his denunciations were echoed in many papers the Single Tax became a matter for general discussion.

The Single Tax pamphlets handed to the voters by those who circulated the petitions, the large amount of literature distributed from headquarters through the mediumship of friends who were found in every county, and the fact that fifty papers volunteered to run Single Tax plate matter, resulted in calling our principles to the attention of every voter.

There are reasons for the small vote in St. Louis where there were strong forces in the field against the Single Tax campaigners. These included the "Wets" and "Drys," the Real Estate Exchange and the *Globe-Democrat*. The "Drys" covered the city with literature, telling the voters that the Single Tax amendment was put on the ballot by the liquor interests to insure a negative vote on all other proposed amendments, including prohibition. The "Wets" gave the "Drys" some reason for telling that falsehood. They had four men at each of the 500 polling places in St. Louis telling everyone to vote No. Mr. Busch, the brewer, sent 200,000 copies of a 64-page magazine with a letter against Single Tax and prohibition to the farmers throughout the State.

The returns so far received at headquarters from friends throughout the State are as follows:

Jackson County, including Kansas City:

1912 For Single Tax 13,358, against 28,066.

1918 For Single Tax 14,360, against 19,713.

Buchanan County, including St. Joe:

1912 Yes 2,729, no 7,004.

1918 Yes 2,938, no 4,388.

Randolph County, including Moberly:

1912 Yes 174, no 5,534.

1918 Yes 768, no 3,912.

Bates County, including Lord Scully estate:

1912 Yes 216, no 5,509.

1918 Yes 368, no 3,975.

Jasper County, including Joplin:

1912 Yes 3,058, no 8,797.

1918 Yes 3,101, no 5,774.

Ray County:

1912 Yes 149, no 4,628.

1918 Yes 342, no 2,946.

Texas

I am glad to send a report from Texas, even though it may lack a dramatic element. In fact for the past two months our Single Tax work has been less active than at any time in two years. This has been due to the vigorous campaigns for the Liberty Loan and War Service funds. The interest in war activities has been exceptionally intense everywhere. Texas is no exception.

There was no political significance in the recent election. Elections in Texas are but confirmations of the primaries and but little interest is taken, as is shown by the light vote cast. All political contests in Texas are fought out at our primaries where political issues are defined and settled. The primaries this year had a new and interesting force on account of the vote of the women. Prohibition and woman's suffrage were the real issues, although apparently in the background. The result has revolutionized the Democratic Party and its control in the State. It remains to be seen what the final result will be. There was but little change in the Senate, only a few men being elected. The lower house is about fifty per cent.; new members and will be much freer from the conventional and conservative traditions of the Democratic Party in this State. Another interesting thing that will have a marked bearing on the coming session will be the absence of a railroad lobby and a liquor lobby. This gives promise of greater freedom for constructive and needed legislation.

For about two or three weeks the big land owners of Texas indulged in a broad and happy smile. It was announced that the Federal government would buy large tracts of land for colonization purposes and an agent was sent here from Washington to help secure these tracts, and report on them. They were to be in lots of not less than 10,000 acres and suitable for division into small farms. There was a great outpouring of patriots, men who were perfectly willing to divide up and part with their holdings in order that the Federal government might have a place for the returning soldiers. Out of our 165,000,000 acres we have about 30,000,000 acres in cultivation and it is estimated that 90,000,000 of the remainder is arable land. From this you can see it would be easy to get a few million acres for colonization. A few days since it was announced that the government was not going to buy this land, but that the States would have to make some provision to furnish the land and the Federal government would only look after the improving and getting it ready for settlement.

If this policy is adhered to it will bring the issue before the coming session of the legislature. We will have to amend our Constitution in order to make this provision and the amending of our Constitution takes the issue before the whole people. This will at least give the Single Taxers an opportunity. We will not oppose the purchase of lands by the State or the alternative measure of providing cheap funds for such purchase, provided a measure for exempting all improvements and personal property from taxation and placing the entire tax burden on land values only is submitted as part of the colonization scheme. We surely have a great opportunity before us.

It is unfortunate that more propaganda work has not been done in the past three years. The State was ready to listen, and every forward-looking man must have known that the issue of the land question would have to come up soon. Some of our Single Taxers have responded generously. I say some; for out of 50,000 or more in the State only a little handful has been at work. If for the past three years we had taken advantage of every opportunity to thrust home this question of honest and just taxation and emphasized the still greater result that would follow in opening up the idle lands we could now face this colonization scheme with unquestioned faith that we would carry our part of it through. It is not too late yet to make a sturdy effort and I believe an increasing number of our Single Taxers will realize their opportunity and rally to the call. Whether we are able or not to have a Single Tax amendment submitted by the coming legislature we must at least fight on until victory is ours. Time and again during the past two years we have been told to "wait, not now, wait until after the war is over." To many it is always "wait" until something else is out of the way. If the Single Taxer waits until nothing else is in his way he might just as well settle down to a quiet, innocuous life and let the world wag on without him. Hundreds of activities have grown up out of the war that had some excuse for existence and their sponsors will push these and invent new ones in order to appeal to our emotions. If we allow ourselves to be led off and absorbed by these emotional appeals we will lose sight of the thing most worth while in all the world. We must free the land first and Texas, that has so much of it idle, is the most promising field now open. We will try to do our part. WM. A. BLACK.

Michigan

ALTHOUGH at least 8,000 petitions were in the hands of voters, in Michigan, for site value taxation, the number actually circulated for signatures were not enough to secure the needed 65,152 signatures in order to submit the proposition by initiative to the electorate next Spring. So the Michigan Site Value Tax League will go before the legislature which convenes in January, and try to induce its members to submit the proposition direct. As the temper of the membership toward taxation legislation of this character is not yet known, it is impossible to foretell the result with any degree of certainty.

While considerable inroads have been made in the country, in arousing interest, and in some cases discussion, the majority of the 35,000 signatures obtained have come from the cities, Detroit leading them all. It only needed to present the petition to city voters to obtain signatures; the country voters had to be argued with; it was a new proposition to them. And in the mind of many was the determination to get "the big fellows" on the assessment rolls. As a result, the "big fellows" are exempt through methods known to all tax dodgers, while the "little fellows," the farmers and those owning homes in the city, have to pay extra to make up for what the big fellows do not pay.

But the fact that site value taxation means higher taxes on land values in the cities, and lower taxes on improved land in the country, is beginning to percolate through agricultural districts, when the voters there are shown that Detroit's area of 50,000 acres has an assessed value of \$466,150,000 and a real value of \$700,000,000—an area not much larger than two ordinary Michigan townships. And that Michigan's 18,000,000 acres in farm lands, only two-thirds of which are under any sort of cultivation, really has a value, independent of improvements, of not more than half of Detroit's 50,000 acres.

For the past year the seeds of just and equitable taxation have been sown in Michigan as never before in the history of the State. There is now not a county in which there are not Single or site value Taxers or land reformers; and while most of the people cling to the idea that to "tax everything" is the right thing to do, the difference between land values and labor values are beginning to be realized.

Detroit's Open Forum, under the direction of F. F. Ingram, is now in its third season. It is doing a great educational work, and it is remarkable with what unanimity the thoughtful speakers advise Single and Site Value taxation as a cure for many of the economic ills of society. This is to be expected with such speakers of national reputation as Louis Wallis, of Chicago, U. S. Immigration Commissioner Howe, and Louis F. Post, of the National Labor Bureau.

Common Sense, the official bulletin of the Michigan Site Value Tax League, has been discontinued.

JUDSON GRESELL.

Rhode Island

THE many years' devoted efforts of ex-Governor Garvin of Rhode Island and his self-sacrificing associates have not been wholly without results as witness the following resolutions passed at the State conference of the A. F. of L. in September:

"Resolved, That the Rhode Island Branch of the American Federation of Labor hereby goes on record in favor of the early enactment of the following:

"First—An act providing for State ownership and operating of the street railways and, Second—An act exempting from taxation buildings and other improvements, and permitting an increase of the rate upon land in order to raise the needed revenue."