

Woonsocket—J. C. Wheelock, A. J. Bennett.

North Smithfield—Edward R. Estey.
Burrilville—Albert H. Sayles.

"Seven others expressed themselves as not being hostile to the amendment, but did not wish their names to be given. No one declared outright against the amendment, the probable or at least possible opposition of two or three being inferable solely from the manner in which they discussed the subject. Only one or two candidates declined to say enough to give some indication of their position upon this vitally important question."

Of the twenty-five Republican candidates whose names are given above, twenty-two were elected. Fifteen Democrats also were elected.

Of the 93 Republicans elected nearly forty, coming mainly from the country towns, were not interviewed at all. These rural members-elect, or their constituents now are being made acquainted with the principle aimed at by local option in taxation through lectures given before the local granges of the State. Rev. Charles Hardon, of Contoocook, New Hampshire, himself a granger in good standing, has for the past three weeks given his time to this good work. He uses two charts, the one enumerating national resources and the other the products of labor, and explains why the former should be taxed and the latter exempted. His address is followed by a general discussion which is very interesting and enlightening. The method adopted by Mr. Hardon is original with him and produces a much more decided impression on an audience than would a lecture without any appeal to the eye.

The Joint Special Committee on Taxes, which is to make its report to the legislature on or before February 15th attended The International Tax Convention held at Louisville about October 1st

The committee has as yet given no public hearings, but is expected to do so at an early date.

The Rhode Island Tax Reform Association has just established a Lecture Service and has issued a circular of which a copy will be forwarded to the Single Tax REVIEW.

LUCIUS F. C. GARVIN.

LONSDALE, R. I.

H. J. CHASE'S WORK IN RHODE ISLAND.

(For the Review.)

The following are some of the impressions gained while engaged in the work described in Dr. Garvin's communication:

1. Confirmation of the fact that some men will sign a petition without fully knowing or taking much pains to find out what it really is. Without doubt the one circulated in this State last year was clearly explained to everybody to whom it was presented; but some may not have given sufficient attention, or may have allowed the matter to pass from their minds almost immediately. That there is much dissatisfaction with present methods of taxation goes without saying; but that it has not yet reached what may be called the boiling point is, I think, equally true. If it had, the work that we are now doing would be largely unnecessary.

2. The fact that the Amendment was referred to a Commission has disposed a considerable number of the signers of last year's petition to "wait and see"—that is, to rest on their oars for the present. But the effect of this reference was altogether the most evident when it came to interviewing the candidates for the legislature. It afforded a convenient, plausible and if honestly urged, an undoubtedly valid excuse for declining to make known their position, and a number did not hesitate to avail themselves of this fact. They declared that they did not think it would be proper for them to express any opinion prior to the report of the Commission. Others said that they had not given the subject sufficient attention to come to any conclusion. Of two candidates interviewed on the same day, one said that he felt under no obligation to his constituents to promise or even intimate what his course would be with regard to any question that might come before the Legislature, that in all cases he would do what he thought was the right thing to do. The other wished to hear first from his constituents. If they wanted this amendment he would vote for it, whatever his own opinion might be as to its merits; if they didn't want it, he would vote against it. Here you have the extremes of attitude encountered.

3. The argument in favor of the amendment that seemed to have the most effect upon both petitioners and candidates was, that it was based upon a just principle—giving to those who had to raise the money their say as to how it should be raised. As soon as I discovered this fact, I confined myself to this argument, and from that time on, my progress was more satisfactory. I took pains to say to the candidates that the petitioners had not committed themselves as a body to any particular plan of taxation that would be possible under the amendment, but to the proposition that each city and town should be given a wider choice of plans than is permitted under the present law. A considerable number thus approached did not hesitate to declare that they favored that idea and were willing to be so quoted. Others were willing to be quoted as being unable, from their present standpoint, to perceive any objection to the idea. Only one man insisted that the real object of the amendment was the introduction of the Single Tax into Rhode Island. I couldn't exactly dispute this, and as I saw that he was hostile to the Single Tax, I pushed on to the next appointment.

Now it would have been a straightforward way to have said to all whom I interviewed, petitioners and candidates, "This amendment will give any city or town in this State the opportunity to try the Single Tax, and that is the reason why we favor it and want you to favor it and work for it;" but I am pretty sure that that would not have been the best way. Our object is to get the amendment, and I think that so far as public sentiment goes, that can be accomplished with less difficulty by appealing to the sense of fair play than by trying to emphasize any particular material advantage that will be possible if it passed. No man who pretends to believe in popular government can advance even a plausible reason against the amendment *per se*, and upon that fact rests the possibility if not the probability of its passage. At least, that is the way it looks to me at present.

All this is not to be understood as recommending the cessation of the direct propaganda of the Single Tax in Rhode

Island—not by any means; but as against talking Single Tax when the only effect will be to arouse opposition to the thing we want to get—the amendment. Let the general plea for that rest upon grounds that all who believe in government by the people can stand upon, shoulder to shoulder. In that direction lies possible if not probable success. The amendment ought to pass, even if the Single Tax had never been heard of.

But again, this is not to disparage the probable effect of a special effort on the part of a limited number of influential men, who do see what this amendment promises, to induce the commission to report in its favor. The only question is to find the men, or even one man, who will undertake this work. With the bringing to bear the very general sentiment favoring the amendment upon the score of its being no more than fair, coupled with a direct appeal to the Commission, its favorable report and passage ought to be a certainty.

H. J. CHASE.

CANADA.

The *Ottawa Citizen*, one of the leading Canadian newspapers, which a short time ago came out in support of the Single Taxers' proposed amendment, to permit provincial legislatures to tax improvement values, business assessments, incomes and salaries at a lower rate than land values, and to which was largely due the credit for obtaining the endorsement of the Ottawa Council, offered its co-operation in obtaining the support of the other municipal councils of the Province. Petition forms, accompanied by circular letters, have been mailed by both the *Citizen* and the Single Tax Association to every council in Ontario, and as a result over 150 municipalities have already signed the petition, and the list is increasing daily.

The Provincial Government at the last session of the Legislature appointed a special committee to consider all proposed changes in the tax laws of the Province. This committee met in November, and the Single Tax Association is exerting every effort to roll up as large a list as possible