

local libraries. Within the last few days the Mechanics' Institute Library of San Francisco has placed on its shelves a complete set of George's works at the request of Joseph Leggett. Many other instances known to us could be cited.

By the time the next issue of the REVIEW appears the committee will be ready with a detailed report of what has been agreed upon.

NEWS—DOMESTIC.

RHODE ISLAND.

A TAX COMMISSION APPOINTED—WORK OF JOHN Z. WHITE—THE SITUATION HOPEFUL.

The Rhode Island legislature adjourned yesterday. In accordance with the recommendation of our Republican Governor, Aram J. Pothier, a joint special Commission, composed of five members of the legislature, has been appointed to deal with the whole question of taxation.

The members of the Commission are Senators, John W. Bennet, of Woonsocket; Wm. M. P. Bowen, of Providence; Representatives, Robert S. Franklin, of Newport; Zenas W. Bliss, of Cranston, and Wm. C. Bliss, of East Providence.

The Commission is to sit during the recess and report to the next legislature in January, 1910. The several bills now pending, including a more rigid taxation of personal property, an inheritance tax, and the local option measure, will be considered and reported upon by this Commission.

As an aid to the work of this Commission the Commissioner of Industrial Statistics has been authorized to collect statistics concerning taxation in the several towns and cities of the State. It is understood that the tables to be made out will have separate columns for land and the improvements thereon.

Such statistics will be of great assistance to the Commission, particularly in connection with a bill just referred to it, calling for the apportionment of the State Tax to the several towns and cities according to the land value of each. The proposed

act conforms to the recommendation of the recent tax Commission of Maine.

Although the hundreds of manufacturers and others who have petitioned the legislature for local option in taxation are disappointed at the failure of the law at this session, they recognize that the appointment of the tax commission is the next best disposition of the matter. Now the tax question is made the liveliest issue of the political year. Candidates next fall can be questioned as to their stand upon the local option measure, and it may be made one of the principal factors in the choice of the new legislature.

During the present session of the State legislature much educational work has been done. In addition to that already reported to the REVIEW, we have had with us for ten days, as representative of the National Lecture Bureau conducted by Mr. Munroe the well known lecturer, Mr. John Z. White. He addressed the Tax Reform Association; the H. B. Club, composed of graduates of Brown University; Woonsocket Business Men's Association; State Normal School; Providence English High School; Bell Street Chapel; British Club; Beneficent Church Club, also its evening Congregation; East Providence High School; R. I. Automobile Club; Fairhaven Improvement Association of Pawtucket; Providence Technical High School; Agricultural College; Carpenters Union in Providence; Woman Suffrage Association; Executive Committee of Cumberland Business Men's Association; Evening Meeting in a Providence Grammar School building; College Equal Suffrage Club; Social Science Class at Brown University; British Club a second time; Rhode Island Business Men's Association.

To those acquainted with Mr. White's clear and convincing style, it is needless to say that these addresses, almost all of them upon economic topics, have had and long will continue to have a great influence for good.

In closing, a few words as to the future. During the past quarter of a century many difficult and important reforms have been effected in this State, and they have been brought about in spite of the indifference

of the educated classes and the opposition of the monied men.

For the first time in entering upon any radical reform we have the countenance and nominal support of manufacturers, merchants and other employers of labor. What we are lacking in is a popular understanding of the immense social advantages sure to result from the removal of local taxes from industry. This calls for the education of the people, which is the duty of the hour.

I believe that it is possible, indeed probable, that our people can be made to understand this vital question between now and November, when all State, all legislative and excepting Newport, all city officials are chosen for the ensuing year. My opinion is that if Mr. John Z. White could spend the coming year in Rhode Island, as he devoted last year to Missouri, that his success there in securing the Initiative and Referendum might easily be duplicated here in the exemption by some municipalities of personal property and improvements from taxation. His work should begin here the first of July and would need to continue for nearly a year.

I advise special effort in Rhode Island, because it is considered to be the best field east of the Mississippi river, and because an object lesson here would be worth so much more than in an agricultural State. The work here should proceed at once because of our annual elections, because it has already been begun effectively, and because in Oregon, another hopeful field, Mr. U'Ren informs us, the Single Tax will not be a direct issue before 1912.

LUCIUS F. C. GARVIN.

LONSDALE, R. I.

PHILADELPHIA.

NOT IDLE HERE—A NEW GROUP OF SINGLE TAXERS OF THE MILITANT SORT—OPEN AIR MEETING AT THE CITY HALL.

There has come of late so little news from Philadelphia that perhaps our readers have begun to wonder what has become of the Old Guard in that city. They have neither

died nor surrendered—but they are more than usually quiet these days. They will come out and speak when requested to do so, but they have no organization, and they are content for the most part to let the active work devolve upon the group who make their headquarters in a dingy printing office at Ninth and Spring Garden streets. Thither one Friday evening in company with Charles Ryan, the editor of the REVIEW directed his steps. After mounting several pairs of stairs and making our way through a number of dark hallways, we reached the office of *The Only Way*.

In some such surroundings as these in the days preceding '93, in the city of Paris, similar choice spirits must have gathered. Victor Hugo has given us glimpses of them. In the old abolition days there were no doubt many little printing offices just as dusty and uninviting as this—and domiciled by young men in whom burned the fire of the same noble enthusiasm.

They were few then as they are now. "We always were few," said Robinson, who is in a way the leader of this group of enthusiasts. But they have the faith that moves mountains.

Mr. Robinson places little reliance on some of the methods of advocacy ordinarily pursued. Local option in taxation and tax reform—these may be good things, but our objective point is the land. The Single Tax is merely a method of getting at it—perhaps not the best method, but at least the best so far proposed. "Teach people what it is that oppresses them," he says. Perhaps he would rather prefer to say *who* it is—for he likes to strike out at men who by upholding the system are responsible for its continuance. "If you are hit in the head with an axe," he told his listeners in the public square, "somebody hit you." And again: "The people who loll in the Belvidere Stratford are responsible for the condition of the men and women who dwell in the slums. This is the only question you have to ask yourselves: why are there so many on the bleachers and so few in the boxes!" And then in homely but racy idiom, and with occasional touches of real elegance, he tells them why.