

Oregon

THE campaign in Oregon will soon be in full swing. The argument for the amendment will appear in the official pamphlet sent to every voter in the State. This Mr. Hermann has prepared, and Mr. Gerrit Johnson has paid for. Part of this follows:

"Single Tax is the only constructive program for the liberty of the world, according to the affirmative argument filed by the Oregon Single Tax League in support of the proposed Single Tax amendment.

"The Single Tax protects the industrial pioneer who blazed the wilderness to lay the foundation of a Republican commonwealth and whose bravery was imposed upon by land sharks who took advantage of ill-formed land laws. There is no remedy for this but the Single Tax. All other attempts proved a failure," the argument declares.

ADVANTAGES ENUMERATED

"Some of the advantages we may expect from the Single Tax are as follows:

"1. It would dispense with a whole army of tax gatherers and others officials which present taxes require, and place in the treasury a much larger portion of what is taken from the people, while by making government simpler and cheaper, it would tend to make it purer. It would get rid of taxes which necessarily provoke fraud, perjury, bribery and corruption, which lead men into temptation, and which tax what the State can least afford to spare—honesty and conscience. Since land lies out-of-doors and cannot be removed, and its value is the most readily ascertained of all values, the tax to which we would resort can be collected with the minimum of cost and the least strain on public morals.

"2. It would enormously increase the production of wealth—

"(a) By the removal of the burdens that now weigh upon industry and thrift. If we tax houses, there will be fewer and poorer houses; if we tax machinery, there will be less machinery; if we tax trade there will be less trade; if we tax capital, there will be less capital; if we tax savings, there will be less savings. All the taxes, therefore, that we would abolish are those that repress industry and lessen wealth. But if we tax land values, there will be no less land.

"(b) On the contrary, the taxation of land values has the effect of making land more easily available by industry, it makes it more difficult for owners of valuable land which they themselves do not care to use to hold it idle for a larger future price.

"(c) The taxation of the processes and products of labor on the one hand and the insufficient taxation of land values on the other, produce an unjust distribution of wealth which is ubilding up in the hands of a few fortunes more monstrous

than the world has ever before seen, while the masses of our people are steadily becoming relatively poorer.

"This same unjust distribution of wealth develops on the one hand a class idle and wasteful because they are too rich, and on the other hand a class idle and wasteful because they are too poor.

"(d) The taxes we would abolish fall most heavily on the poorer agricultural districts and tend to drive population and wealth from them to the great cities. The tax we would increase would destroy that monopoly of land which is the great cause of that distribution of population which is crowding the people too closely together in some places and scattering them too far apart in other places."

Elsewhere the argument states:

"There is nothing in this measure that in any way disturbs the present guarantee of title to land. It may be transferred or bequeathed, together with its improvements, just as is done today. Should you now not pay your taxes you would lose your property. There is no other guarantee that government can give. This security would be the same under the Single Tax as it now is with this advantage: the economic situation would be so improved under the Single Tax that the holder of title to land that is used could pay the nominal tax on the location instead of being forced to give his property to the State, as in many cases he is forced to do now."

Mr. Pierce, the Democratic candidate for Governor, having announced that he was anxious to debate with the Single Taxers and show them what fools they were, a challenge was immediately issued to that gentleman by some of the farmers and by Mr. Hermann. To this no reply has been received. Perhaps Mr. Pierce on reflection is not so eager. How little he knows of his subject is shown by a recent utterance in which he says: "There's only one tax that a fellow can't pass on and that is an income tax."

The *Portland Telegram*, in an editorial under the title, "Single Tax, Real and Counterfeit," says that the measures submitted to the voters of Oregon were not the Single Tax of Henry George, and says that the Single Tax has many supporters among thoughtful citizens. It wants to know about the New York Exemption Law, and asks for proof that the building boom here is the result of such exemption. It says it does not know the details of the law. As the *Telegram* seems sincerely desirous of information, maybe some of our readers here will enlighten the editor.

Messrs. Ross and Hermann spoke before a good audience in Portland on July 22, and the sentiment of those present appeared almost unanimous in favor of the amendment. On August 2nd Mr. Ross spoke before the Trades Council at Salem. In a debate with Mr. Stallard, leader of the Non-Partisan League, Mr. Hermann made an address and Mr. Stallard, following Mr. Hermann in a few closing remarks, said he had "nothing to say."

Later information tells us that Mr. Pierce will meet Mr. Hermann in debate. This will occur some time in August. All candidates will be invited to debate the Single Tax. In this invitation will be included two of the foremost representatives of the Income Tax Amendment.

Mr. Will Ross will work with Mr. Hermann, speaking

and writing in defence of the Single Tax measure. It is felt that there is a splendid chance of a great increase of the vote in this State and no stone will be left unturned to effect this result.

No argument against the Single Tax will appear in the State pamphlet, but an argument against the Income Tax amendment initiated by the State Grange will be included, which will be grist to the mill.