

prevail, so that even Real Estate Boards will repudiate the special fiscal privileges which have been so long their stock in trade. The traffic in opportunities of access to American soil will then go to the discard, as have not a few other unworthy practices in the past, by grace of a roused conscience and by force of new and better laws.

## Wanted—A Single Tax Budget

WE heartily commend to Single Taxers the following statement by Mr. Eugene M. Travis, New York State Comptroller:—

"The scope and method of raising revenue for the support of our State Government presents one of the greatest determining factors in the life of our people. The ignorance and willful disregard in the past of the methods of raising revenue have powerfully encouraged a widespread belief that our citizens should look to their Government for support rather than that they should support the Government. To this defective education may be attributed the common confusion between the payment of taxes and the benefits or profitable returns therefrom. We grow up from youth and find roads and bridges, schools and churches—in short, all the necessary State government provided as free as the air. We have but to live to experience their benefits. Yet the problems connected with the raising of necessary revenues are seldom discussed.

"Consequently, we enter upon our duties as citizens and exercise our franchise rights not only in ignorance of the principles or methods by which the cost of these privileges is defrayed, but also with a positive disinclination to receive instruction upon the subject. In brief, it is one of our most singular habits of mind that we continue to neglect the study of the most vital subjects that concern the welfare of the citizen. Probably not one citizen out of a hundred can be induced to think about how much State government costs annually. As long as this is the situation, it is difficult to see how our State Government can be wisely or more economically managed."

If our Single Tax movement suffers from one defect more than another, it suffers from a mental aversion to the study of the details of the present fiscal system, with municipal, state and national budgets so miscellaneously provided for. As a general rule, the task is evaded and the easier course adopted of proclaiming pure principles, economic and moral, with an occasional illustration or two.

What is as much needed as anything is an analysis of the budget of each of the states and a reconstruction of same upon the basis of a redistribution of taxes according to the nearest available estimate of land values, accompanied by comparative tables illustrating the differences in fiscal incidence. The business community would quickly appreciate the significance of such a demonstration. We suggest that in each state a duly qualified technical committee be charged with the task of preparing such a Report. It could not be done too soon, considering the increasing gravity of the problems of taxation.

The formation of a national committee for the specific purpose of preparing a similar report on the federal budget is an urgent patriotic duty.

It is time, too, that a few representative municipal budgets should be similarly treated.

Material of the kind above described is perhaps the best ammunition for campaign work. It is needed for the self-education of our movement. It is needed to give greater definiteness and clarity to our aims. It is needed to dissipate once and for all the impression of vague social revolt and yet vaguer social aspirations with which, in the popular mind, we are too often identified.

Let us have, then, as soon as possible an authoritative document illustrating the Single Tax system as applied to the budget of any one of our states with a comparative demonstration of its advantages over the system now in force.

The present chaotic, oppressive fiscal system survives simply by grace of the mental indolence of the tax payer before the drudgery of giving to the public budget the same careful examination given to his private budget. Mr. Travis deserves our thanks for his plain speaking on the subject. The forces of reaction do not need his warning. They are fully alive to their present advantage. The warning should be heeded by productive industry and trade, which, consciously or unconsciously, are the forces of progress.

## Lloyd George on Trial

I SAY to labor: You shall have justice; you shall have fair treatment, a fair share of the amenities of life, and your children shall have equal opportunities with the children of the rich. To capital I say: You shall not be plundered or penalized; do your duty by those who work for you, and the future is free for all the enterprise or audacity you can give us. But there must be equal justice. Labor must have happiness in its heart. We'll put up with no sweating. Labor is to have its just reward. And when the whole world sees that wealth lies in production, that production can be enormously increased, with higher wages and shorter hours, and when the classes feel confidence in each other, and trust each other, there will be abundance to requite the toil and to gladden the hearts of all. We can change the whole face of existence."

These big words are from one of Lloyd George's recent pre-election speeches. They promise "equal justice," "equal opportunities," "just reward," "amenities," "happiness," "higher wages," "shorter hours," and "we can change the whole face of the existence." Does he mean it? Is it a mere electioneering bid? Why does he speak of labor and capital, and make no mention of the landed interests which, behind fiscal privileges, exploit them both? Do the terms of the political coalition to which Lloyd George is pledged, saddle the landed interests as firmly as ever upon the backs of labor and capital? These are dangerous times to play false with the people. Better had he spoken the brave, true, wise words of not so many years ago, when he fought to break down the fiscal bar-