

our officials. Our business men and toilers are slow to "catch on" to the remedy, but another year of such education may accomplish much.

ANDREW HUTTON.

Schenectady, N. Y.

#### NEW ZEALAND'S NEW MINISTER OF EDUCATION A FAMOUS SINGLE TAXER.

*Editor Single Tax Review :*

The chief event of interest to land reformers in this colony is the advent of the new Liberal Government, with Sir Joseph Ward as Premier and Hon. G. Fowlds, Minister for Education and Public Health. Mr. Fowlds had not been home from America more than a week when he was appointed to the above-mentioned high position. The land policy of the new Government is very progressive. Their land bill now before the House provides for the cessation of the sale of Crown lands and for the limitation of the value of land that any one person can hold. It also provides that all Crown lands are to be set aside as an endowment for education, charitable aid, and old age pensions. This land bill is welcomed by Single Taxers not altogether because they agree with every clause of it, but because it shows that the new Government is prepared to introduce important land reforms in the interests of people as against the land speculators. Only one victory I have to report for the rating on unimproved values. The Borough of Eastbourne on August 8th carried the proposal by 78 votes to 24.

Disappointment is expressed among Single Taxers here that Mr. Bryan has decided not to come to New Zealand. We would be pleased to see him here.

G. STEVENSON.

Auckland, New Zealand.

#### MR. FLURSCHEIM QUESTIONS MR. WAKEFIELD'S STATEMENTS.

*Editor of Single Tax Review :*

As you do your best to make your magazine a high class production, I think you owe it to the cause and to the paper's reputation to correct the statements of Mr. W. H. T. Wakefield on page 11 and 12 of the July number. I expect the gentleman will not take cover under the dramatized form in which he gives his ideas as those of a drummer at a railroad station, thus perhaps excusing himself with the unfortunately deserved bad reputation of many belonging to this otherwise respectable class, as far as exact truthfulness is concerned. I hope he will stand up for the figures he gives us and which are absolutely surprising. In the interest of the cause I ask him for the proof of the following statements :

1. "Farmers own only about ten per cent. of the nation's land values.

2. "The greatest land values are in the cities and towns.

3. "Mining lands alone are worth more than farm lands and yield a much larger net revenue.

4. "The land values of Chicago alone are greater than all the farms in Illinois.

5. "You can not buy enough land for a lettuce bed, or a seat for a dog kennel for five thousand dollars without going fifteen miles from the City Hall of Chicago.

6. "In Massachusetts, New York and Pennsylvania the bare land values of cities are twenty times the farm values; in Ohio ten times, and so on. Even in Kansas you have four or five cities in which land values exceed those of all your farms, as I find in your State auditor's reports."

And as a conclusion from this all :

7. "The farmers would pay under the Single Tax less than one-fifth or sixth of the proportion of tax they now pay."

Point 1.—As the statistics of 1900 are still incomplete I have to take those of 1890 and there the valuation of farms with improvements is 18.3 billions, while the value of the whole real estate of the country is 35.7 billions, which gives the farms 27 and not 10 per cent. of the total. But as the proportion of improvements is smaller on farm land than on city land the relation of the land alone is far greater, probably at least one-third.

Ad. 2 and 3.—As mining lands are only 1.3 billions in the same year they are only one-tenth of farm values and not more than these. If we add the 8.7 railroad values and deduct them together with farm lands from the total, leaving all other items out of account, which would reduce the remainder left for town and city lands still more, we only find 12.4 billions for this item which is less than the farms; but if we take account of the relative values of land and improvements, the city land figures far below the farm land, not above.

4, 5 and 6 are so evidently untrue that it would be wasting time to enter into them and the conclusion under 7 falls absolutely with the grounds it is built upon.

The worst of such articles is that they injure our cause more than anything else, for it is human nature to judge the whole by its parts, and if one fraction only of our arguments is based on such gross misstatements the whole of them will be so estimated, and this is hard, for our main faith that the land belongs to the people by divine right and that all our evils find their principal root in our existing land laws are gospel truth.

MICHAEL FLURSCHEIM.

#### MR. WAKEFIELD REPLIES.

*Editor Single Tax Review :*

Like other socialists, Mr. Flurschheim depends more on his feelings than his knowledge of economic facts for his principles, hence he uses expressions not demanded by

the occasion. Nevertheless he shall have a courteous reply.

He quotes the thoroughly discredited census of 1890 as giving farm land values at 27 per cent. of total land values, though I am unable to find in it any statement for more than 20 per cent. Nevertheless, he may be right, even though the census figures are wrong, for that so-called census is a fearful and wonderous thing for any man to say he understands.

Certainly no careful writer can quote that census as even approximate authority. Not only was it carelessly taken by incompetent men on a faulty plan, so that comparisons with previous ones is impossible, but we have from different sources evidence that its economic conclusions were tampered with for partisan purposes.

Prof. Waite, in charge of the true wealth bureau and a statistician of ability and high character, states that he was compelled to resign rather than arbitrarily change his figures. In a letter to his personal friend he said: "After deducting buildings and other improvements, mineral and forest values and suburban lands valuable as building sites, I found the true farm land values to be rather less than ten per cent. of total land values. The commissioner, Mr. Porter, said the party managers thought this would cause dissatisfaction among farmers and that I must raise this to at least twenty per cent. Declining to do so my resignation was asked for and given."

Though not intended for publication the receiver of this letter was indignant enough to secure its publication in *The Craftsman*, where I first saw it. I was in the newspaper business at the time and in my large exchange list I saw the letter often copied in Democratic and Reform or Labor papers, but not often in Republican organs. I have never seen any denial of its correctness or authenticity, and as it is in accord with much other evidence to the same effect I believe it reliable.

Mayor Tom L. Johnson, of Cleveland, has been extensively quoted as placing farm land values as ten per cent. of total land values, and Congressman Pierce, of Ohio, has said that this estimate is too high rather than too low.

How utterly worthless are the census figures Mr. F. quotes for mine land values is seen in the sworn testimony of C. M. Schwab, when president of the steel trust, before a Congressional committee. In accounting for the trust's large capitalization he said it owned 60,000 acres Connellsville coking coal land, worth \$60,000 an acre, and that its iron ore lands were equally valuable. It is known that nearly all these coal lands were assessed and returned as farm lands to keep down taxation and the same was probably true of the iron ore lands, as it is of mining land generally. In the north part of Crawford county, Kansas, a company owns several thousand acres which the diamond drill shows to contain \$20,000

of coal per acre, but because they are now used only for farming are assessed at only the usual farm value, and this is true of all coal and other mines generally where not actually worked. What is the value of the Pennsylvania anthracite lands, gauged by the incomes derived from them. Certainly more than the one and one-third billions which Mr. F. thinks the total of the nation.

In only six of the 106 counties of Kansas is coal mined in commercial quantities, yet it is questionable if the mines do not yield more net revenues than farms. If we add the lead, zinc, oil and gas to the coal—all in a dozen counties—there can be no question. How many Missouri farms will it take to equal the \$300,000 weekly output of lead and zinc in Jasper county alone? Did the several thousand Pennsylvania millionaires get it farming her rocky hills or in coal and iron—plus tariff?

What a horse laugh Mr. F. would hear if he should try to buy one-half the American copper mines for one and one-third billions. What does he think all our gold and silver mines are worth when they make so many millionaires?

If Mr. F. will consult reliable commercial statistics in relation to the annual values of coal and other minerals produced and capitalize their source, then reflect that only the infinitesimally small proportion of mines actually in productive use are assessed other than as farm lands, he will himself laugh at the billion and a third idea as a good joke. If he will compare this annual output of wealth with that of agricultural produce he will find that the latter gives less than mechanics' wages to the ones engaged in its production and the former leaves enough net profit to add largely to our crop of new millionaires.

That one should question the relative values of city and town and of farm land values in the way Mr. F. does is astonishing. Certainly our cause needs the aid of exact and exhaustive statistics on these points when even the author of "Rent, Interest, and Wages" goes so far astray. No better work can be done for the cause than the creation of a commission to examine and report on the several classes of land values and the relative net incomes derived from them. Facts are more convincing than argument.

If Mr. F. will consult Schilling's Illinois Labor Bureau Report for 1896 he will find official figures for what he calls a gross misstatement. If he will multiply the 300,000 acres on which Chicago is built by only \$250,000 per acre—certainly a conservative estimate of values—but I forgot, Socialists do not figure, they only feel. Supposing he did figure, if he will add the land values of the hundreds of other cities and towns of the State and to these the undeveloped but monopolized value of her vast coal area, then deduct the value of lands used exclusively for farming, he will see a light.

Mr. F. erre—at least differs from all others

—in saying the proportion of improvement value to land value is less on farms than in towns and cities. Both my reading and observation is the reverse of this. Also, farmers own a vastly greater proportion of personal property in live stock, teams, implements, grain and produce on hand, etc., on which they are taxed, than owners of city lands. I personally know the most costly buildings in Chicago, in Kansas City and in several others to stand on land more valuable than the buildings. In Kansas and Missouri (I live near State line) a fairly improved farm is assessed about double vacant land adjoining of same quality.

I fear I have already exceeded my space, but in reference to proportion of taxes paid by farmers under present and Single Tax systems I will say that I took into consideration not merely the sums paid into public treasuries but the incidence of taxation also, as one must to give his conclusions any value. To study the land question without reference to taxation, or the reverse, as Mr. F. seems to have done, is a waste of time, as they are not two questions, but one. Under the present system practically all National, State and local taxation ultimately falls upon either producer or consumer of products and farmers are both. Others can pass taxes on as cost of doing business, really paying nothing, but workers and consumers cannot. It is safe to say that it costs farmers ten dollars in tribute to monopolies to put one dollar in the National treasury, possibly much more, and in direct or local taxes he pays in higher prices tax assessed against merchants, manufacturers, professional men, etc.

On the other hand, farmers derive little if any benefit from expenditure of public funds. The American farmer and his family work hard, live hard, feed half the world, and remains poor.

The fact that the three poorest farming States (least productive soil) Massachusetts, New York and Pennsylvania, absorb more than one-half the entire annual increase of the nation's wealth—that is, a small per cent. of their inhabitants do, is irrefutable evidence of the small earning power and value of farm land as compared with the tribute exacting power of the mines, city lots, railways, etc., owned by the few wealthy persons residing in these three States.

The fact that five per cent. of the American people receive more of the yearly increment of wealth than the other ninety-five per cent. is evidence of the low earning power of farms for farmers, notwithstanding farm products are the basis of our prosperity and largest item of exports.

The average wealth per family of the nation is about \$7,000. The average for farmers is about \$1,500, not counting farm tenants and laborers. See census of '80, '90, 1900, and U. S. statistical abstracts.

W. H. T. WAKEFIELD.

Mound City, Kas.

#### GEORGE BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION IN DES MOINES.

Henry George's birthday was celebrated in Des Moines at the home of Lona L. Robinson under the trees on the lawn. "Henry George, the Man," was the subject of the address of Hon. Walter H. Butler, ex-Congressman (Dem.). Mr. Harvey H. Ingham spoke on the Land Question. Mr. Ingham is the editor of the *Register and Leader*, Republican paper of Des Moines. Mr. William Morphy, Single Taxer and workman, spoke on the Labor Question, and Mr. H. M. Pratt, Single Tax Socialist, spoke on Scientific Taxation. Another of the speakers was Mr. C. O. Holly, who was very nearly elected mayor of Des Moines last Spring. Miss Helen Randall gave vocal selections. There were about fifty guests in attendance.

#### DENMARK.

##### REAL GEOWTH IN DENMARK AND NORWAY OF SINGLE TAX PRINCIPLES.

The Danish Henry George League has just issued the first numbers of its second organ, a little weekly sheet entitled *The Henry George Gazette*. It is published in Aarhus. Two papers, a weekly and a monthly, officially pledged to news and propaganda of the Single Tax movement, is not a bad record for the work of a league only a few years old. The latest number of *The Henry George Gazette* comes to hand, containing the text of a petition addressed by the league to the members of the National Government asking that in the new tax assessments to be undertaken (under changed laws), the assessing of land to be held entirely separate from all other values, whether of buildings or improvements of any kind. The petition explains the eminent justice and practicality of such an assessment in a few clear and simple phrases. Its simplicity of reasoning and the logic of its appeal to common sense are excellent and refreshing.

From September, 1905, until September, 1906, the Danish Henry George League has held two hundred open meetings with Single Tax speeches by forty different speakers. This is an increase of over a hundred meetings as against the record of eighty-three meetings in the year preceding, and seventy meetings in the year before that.

Now that Norway is beginning to recover from the troubles occasioning the separation from Sweden, and is settling down to a practical discussion of internal questions, Single Taxers are awakening to the opportunity this gives them. Judge Viggo Ullmann, the leader of the Norwegian Single Taxers, has made several notable speeches at mass meetings in various communities, which meetings had been called to consider the question of taxation and revenue.

G. I. C.