

land for the people" have been fighting the good fight to relieve industry from taxation and transfer its burdens to land values.

From time to time reports of progress there have been made which to many have doubtless conveyed the idea that progress in this country was relatively slower than that being made in the United Kingdom. For instance, the vote in the House of Commons on the Rating Bill—158 to 229, in 1902; of 183 to 170, in 1903; of 225 to 158, in 1904, and of 202 to 112 (a majority of 90), in 1905, has been cited as evidence of a much more rapid progress towards the Single Tax than we are able to show. Especially is this so regarded by those who remember that the high water mark of Single Tax membership in Congress—the 53rd—was but four, Johnson, Maguire, Simpson and Warner, that there was but one in the 58th, and that there are none in the present Congress. But note the difference. Johnson, Maguire, Simpson and Warner, in the 53rd, as well as the lone Single Taxer in the 58th, stood for the abolition of all other forms of taxation and the taking of the entire rental value of land for public purposes. The vote in the British House of Commons, however, has never been anything more than a declaration that there should be a new assessment of land—the present being some 250 years old—and that a figure representing three (3%) per cent. of its selling value should be placed in a new column, and that said 3 per cent. should contribute to the rates (taxes) in the same manner and at the same rate that buildings and personalty are now taxed. The McNamara Bill of 1903 only asked for the right to levy a rate of a penny in the pound, equal to five-twelfths of one per cent. How much would be obtained under the Trevelyan bill of 1905, would depend, I assume, upon the local rates, but as the average rate in England and Wales is now a trifle over five shillings in the pound (rental, not selling value) it would mean an average contribution of not to exceed one quarter of three per cent. of selling value—or three-fourths of one per cent. of its rental value, that is assuming that the assessment was the full selling value and not as with us (even here in New York City) much below it.

Great progress is undoubtedly being made in Great Britain, but we must not forget that they have much further to go than we have. Here in New York City we are now probably taking on an average one per cent. of the rental value of land—the local tax rate being over 1.50 on about two-thirds land valuation.

It is gratifying to know that the Campbell-Bannerman ministry is committed to the principle of the Trevelyan bill, and that we may reasonably expect that with a good plurality in Parliament which the elections about to be held will surely give them they will send to that bulwark of landed aristocracy—the House of Lords—a bill providing for this entering wedge of the Single Tax.

ROBERT BAKER.

News—Domestic.

KANSAS.

SACRIFICING THE SCHOOL LANDS—OKLAHOMA WISER THAN KANSAS—WORK FOR SINGLE TAX LETTER WRITERS.

There is apparently little direct work in Single Tax agitation in the Jayhawker State just now, but there is considerable along collateral lines of educational influence. The looting of our school lands is attracting attention, and Single Tax writers can do valuable work by showing the almost incredible loss to the people through sale of school lands in the past as well as in the present.

The original grant of lands for educational purposes comprises sections (640 acres) eighteen and thirty-six of each township, or one-eighteenth of the State's area, for common schools, and about a half million acres each for State University, State Normal Schools, and Agricultural Colleges. The total was over four million acres, which now brings an average yearly rental of two dollars per acre, or about eight million dollars. The State constitution prohibited the sale of school lands without a direct vote of the people, but the real estate speculators and politicians soon secured the submission of the question to the people and as school lands always had been sold in other States and as the choice school lands were then in demand, the people voted to sell their patrimony for what has proven to be, a mess of political pottage. The million and a half acres granted for higher education were selected by commissioners when there was little settlement and were the choicest of the State, a third valuable coal lands and much in the present oil and gas belts, the whole now averaging perhaps \$100 per acre in value.

Much of these lands brought but a dollar and a quarter per acre, and the average of all the State school lands sold was but two dollars per acre, or much less than the present annual rental value. The proceeds were invested in municipal bonds, giving a fertile field for official rascality, so that nearly one-third of the permanent fund has been lost. An average country school district would now have a larger income from the rental of the land, if it had been retained, by seven times, than its present share of the interest on bonds in the State school fund, while the loss to the three higher educational institutions was much greater in proportion.

Oklahoma has not yet sold her very valuable school lands, and is deriving a large revenue from their rental, but the leasees and politicians are clamoring and organizing to secure their sale at nominal prices. No better work can be done than by writing letters to the Oklahoma newspapers, most of which are edited by men insufficiently

educated on all economic questions and need good advice and instruction.

The editor of the *Kansas City Star* is a good target. He stated editorially that landlords give as much value to society as they receive from it, and that economic evolution disproved the theories of Henry George, but soon after began a series of articles upon the injustice of taxing water consumers 84 cents per thousand gallons, the cost of pumping being ten cents, the proceeds going to extend and improve the municipal water works and to pay off the bonds for their purchase, while real estate pays no tax whatever on account of water supply that adds so largely to its value, the city getting its water free of cost for public purposes—that is, paid for by private water consumers, mostly tenants. I am inclined to think that this able hired man of a millionaire newspaper owner is either a Single Taxer, or needs to learn where "he is at."

The Republican State Committee of Kansas is said to have sent a circular to all local workers that they should if possible prevent any local debates of political questions or organizations for such debating. At any rate, this is being done and no one dare cheap against monopolies in a school house or hall.

W. H. T. WAKEFIELD.

Mound City.

MISSOURI.

ST. LOUIS WELCOMES JOHN Z. WHITE—LOCAL ACTIVITY IN ST. LOUIS.

John Z. White spent three weeks in St. Louis in November and talked to many people every night, speaking at some point in or about the city. Altogether his visit with us was very profitable in a propaganda way, much more so than the year before, when his reputation as an entertainer and logician had not been established hereabouts. White grows in strength, and those who heard him on his first St. Louis trip were more than anxious to attend his meetings this year, and to persuade others who had not heard him, to come too. Wherever he goes, White makes friends and converts, for his treatment is so logical and easily understood, and all the elements of frenzy being absent, his arguments are particularly persuasive and captivating, leaving no rancor in any one's mind, no matter how antagonistic he may be to the philosophy expounded. I consider this a great forte, and one that brings strength to the cause wherever and whenever the speaker appears as our representative and exponent.

Prof. White's season in St. Louis was closed out in a blaze of glory at the Planter's Hotel, the leading hostelry of the city. What was at first intended for a dinner at which perhaps twenty-five might be expected to attend, the affair having been arranged after an eleventh hour resolution, developed into a splendid feast of reason at

which something like a hundred and twenty-five sat down, many of the "old guard" being present, feeling as enthusiastic as in times past, with a large number of new faces to an "old stager" like myself.

I notice in this morning's paper (30th) that Harry Sycamore, one of the "old guard," and still active propagandist, was elected President of the Aschenbroedel Club (musicians' union), an organization in which there are several hundred musicians, and which has its own club house at 3535 Pine (a fine building and until recently an elegant residence of heroic proportions). The St. Louis Single Tax League has occupied rooms with the organization for several years and meets at the club headquarters on each Wednesday evening of the week. Gus A. Menger, Owen Miller and P. G. Anton, all Single Taxers, were chosen as the Board of Trustees. It looks like a Single Tax victory in the club, which carries on its roster many of the faithful—men of intelligence and influence in the industrial world.

Prof. Sycamore is a thorough disciple of George, and his election to the chief executiveship of a club such as that consisting of all the leading professional and semi-professional musicians of the city, certainly speaks flatteringly of his personal worth to our cause.

The Ladies' Single Tax Club is meeting at the homes of the members on the first Thursday of each month. The last meeting was held at my house, 1390 Aubert Avenue, and it proved to be not only enjoyable, but profitable, as well, some strangers to the faith being in attendance. Mrs. Hall (104 South Channing Ave.) is the president, and the right woman in the right place. She is developing much ability as a speaker, and is imbued with the true spirit.

L. P. CUSTER.

News—Foreign.

ENGLAND.

That the agitation for the taxation of Land Values in Great Britain is gradually permeating political thought of all shades can easily be seen, and we Single Taxers may, I think, reasonably assume that it has fairly entered the region of practical politics.

It must not, however, be inferred that there is any great weight of public opinion in favor of the measure, but ground is being gained all along the line, and there is an ever increasing body of men inclining towards it. Undoubtedly the fact of many important municipalities so emphatically declaring in its favor has caused many former opponents to modify their attitude. Even in the House of Commons itself, where not so long since the movement was looked upon with indifference, there is quite an altered feeling in evidence. Not that it is much more favored than formerly out-