

News—Domestic.

ARKANSAS.

SIGNS OF PROGRESS IN THIS STATE—LAND
ASSESSED APART FROM IMPROVEMENTS IN
PULASKI COUNTY.

Some ten or fifteen years ago we had a Single Tax Club in Little Rock in the days of the *Standard*, and when old Col. Sol. F. Clark was living, but it gradually died out. While organization is lacking, I think there is ten times the sentiment in favor of the reform that there was at the times spoken of, and Single Tax literature has been the cause. The *Public* and "*Why*" have aided greatly in this respect. One thing in particular that has kept the Single Tax in the background in Arkansas is the exceptional advantages here in exploiting the natural resources such as timber and mines. It is astonishing the number of large fortunes that have recently been made in that way.

In many respects Arkansas is not greatly behind the times. For instance, we have direct nomination for all political offices, including that of U. S. Senator, which practically makes it an elective office by the people. We have direct legislation on the liquor question, and in municipal affairs in regard to franchises, and the most rigid anti-trust legislation in the United States. Of course the last was not worth the paper it is written on, though the act has been approved by our Supreme Court, and suits have been brought against nearly all the great trusts, including the Fire Insurance Companies, which have been run out of the State. The reason it is ineffective is because it does not strike at cause, but only effect. It shows that the sentiment of the people is all right if properly directed. But our demagogic governor is using this sentiment to break into the U. S. Senate, and he has been able so far to do what Lincoln said could not be done, that is, to fool *all* the people *all* the time. I hope some time in the future to be able to have a Single Tax lecturer down this way. I almost forgot to say that the assessor of Pulaski County has started a crusade for a more equitable assessment of real estate under the present law. Charles F. Martin is his name. Louis Rhoton, prosecuting attorney of Pulaski and Perry Counties, has suddenly sprung into notoriety of the Folk order on account of his boodle prosecutions of members of the last Legislature. He has made one conviction and came very near getting the president of the Senate behind the bars. There are grand jury indictments pending against several more of the late members for bribery that will come up for trial this fall. We must show that direct legislation is largely an antidote.

In Pulaski county in which Little Rock, the capital, is situated, ground values are assessed separately from the improvements.

I have had two different bills introduced in the Legislature providing for it to become a State law, but could never get them through.

We also have here what are called improvement districts for the improvement of streets. The adjoining property that is benefitted by the street improvement pays the bill; but the improvements on land are assessed also. To only assess the ground value I think would be unlawful owing to a provision in the State constitution providing that all property shall be taxed.

R. HERIOT.

El Dorado, Ark.

KANSAS.

GOOD WORK OF THE PITTSBURG "KANSAN"—
DISCOVERIES OF GREAT NATURAL RE-
SOURCE OF SMALL ADVANTAGE TO THE
WORKERS OF KANSAS.

Except the steady and good work by *The Kansan* of Pittsburg there is not much direct propaganda work in the press of this State. Some literature is being distributed and friends of the cause are not altogether idle nor wholly silent. Some talking will be done this winter. Attention is being called to the fact that the great discoveries of oil and gas, like the former ones of coal, lead and zinc, have not benefitted the poor man at all, have not raised wages nor given additional employment to men living here, gangs of Greeks and Italians having been imported to do the work. Prices of kerosene have not fallen at all, and the natural gas where cheap is discounted in price of real estate and rents. Usually the gas companies have given low rates only long enough to induce putting in plumbing and gas stoves, and then advanced them to about cost of coal or wood. Such advances result in less demand for houses and lower rents, and it is amusing to hear landlords cursing the gas lords for hurting "business" by their hoggishness. The gas well owners refuse to pay more than farm land value tax on their lucrative property, on the plea that gas has no value until it reaches the surface, and seem likely to prevail in the courts, as they have a precedent in similar favors granted coal mine owners, the latter being nearly all railway companies, which are "in politics."

The governor and the attorney-general are trying to oust from office Mayor W. W. Rose of Kansas City, Kansas, instigated thereto by a water works corporation of that city, which is seeking a piratical renewal of its charter for thirty years. This water company has long violated every provision of its present charter, giving only water thick with mud and only ten pounds fire pressure, when it contracted to give sixty pounds. Rose—a Single Tax Democrat—was elected on the water works charter issue and that of compelling the six large

packing houses to pay the same rate of tax as others, the city going largely Republican except for Rose on the mayoralty. The packers, water works and other large corporations have been assessed at five to ten per cent. of actual value heretofore, and others at fifty to seventy per cent. The Missouri Pacific Railway was assessed at fifty dollars per acre on eighty acres in the heart of the city, which real estate men value at \$10,000 per acre, and five other railways similarly favored. Rose removed the Republican assessor and appointed an honest Republican, the Republican council refusing to confirm a Democrat.

The ostensible excuse for attempting to oust Rose is that he has not strictly enforced the Prohibition law, though he has made more effort to do so than any of his Republican predecessors. Rose had closed all the gambling houses and policy shops, which had run openly for twenty years.

W. H. T. WAKEFIELD.

Mound City, Kan.

MASSACHUSETTS.

WORK AMONG THE HIGH SCHOOLS—GOOD RESULTS OBTAINED—CONTEMPLATED WORK AMONG THE PASTORS.

Late in the autumn of 1904 Mr. John G. Pike strongly urged the Executive Committee to get into communication with high schools, debating societies, colleges and churches for the purpose of supplying them with literature and interesting them in the Single Tax.

The Executive Committee appointed a sub-committee to carry out this work. This sub-committee first of all sent out in January, 1905, circulars to 250 principals of high schools in Massachusetts asking them to receive literature and get it distributed in any debating societies or classes for economic study which may exist in connection with the schools. A printed list of questions suitable for study and discussion was enclosed. In reply 37 favorable answers were received almost all of which gladly offered to study and distribute the literature.

To all who had responded to the Committee's circular parcels of Single Tax literature were forwarded free. After a few weeks had elapsed the Committee sent to these same correspondents another circular asking them to be good enough to report results and to say whether the students had been interested in the literature and in the land question; what discussions, if any, had been carried on, and how far the question seemed to be understood.

The replies to these inquiries were generally of a very encouraging nature, many of the principals asking for further supplies of literature, and indicating a lively interest in the land question, and anticipating still greater interest when the question had been

further studied and was better understood.

The Committee's circular intimated to the teachers that this effort on the part of the League was entirely experimental, and asked for any suggestions they could offer which may be of use for the further work of the League. Many interesting and gratifying replies were received.

The Executive Committee is well satisfied with the results of the first attempt to interest teachers and senior scholars in Single Tax doctrines, and believe they have hit on a line of work which will be fruitful of good in other directions. It is in contemplation to send out this coming autumn similar circulars to ministers of various denominations throughout Massachusetts. Since "the earth is the Lord's," and He has "given it to the children of men," ministers may be supposed to be specially interested in seeing that the property is properly administered. We hope for good results.

Following is the list of questions proposed by the Massachusetts League as subjects for debate:

1. Would the Single Tax method of raising public revenue be beneficial or otherwise to the community?
2. What would be the effect of the Single Tax on (a) Wages? (b) Capital? (c) Rent? (d) Wealth production? (e) On the moral condition of society?
3. Would it be most advisable to apply the Single Tax at once by substituting it for all other taxation for revenue, or gradually by remitting other taxes as the Single Tax was increased?
4. Is private property in land justifiable morally or economically?
5. What would be gained economically and morally by substituting direct taxation for our present methods?
6. What effect would the Single Tax have on trust monopoly?

SAMUEL BRAZIER.

Boston, Mass.

MISSOURI.

THE LOCAL WORK IN ST. LOUIS—ACTIVITY AMONG THE WOMEN.

Single Tax matters in St. Louis are livening up somewhat now that the Fall season is on. The "Informal Club," which meets at the Holy Communion Church, 27th and Washington Avenue, once a week, has had its initial meeting for the season, and started off with a good attendance. There is no organization in its make-up, simply a "come-together" class of students, who are reading George's "Progress and Poverty" and dissecting its philosophy. Messrs. Louis Cohen and J. W. Steele, the latter one of the "old guard," are the promoters, and the pastor of the church is an attendant and fellow student.