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Single Tax Movement in Arkansas

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ARKANSAS. THE POLITICAL WATER8 OF ARKANSAS
SEETHING— A BELATED CONVERT TO THE SINGLE TAX—
SOCIALISM HELPING THE PROGRESS OF THOUGHT.

There is nothing of special interest along Single Tax lines to report from Little Rock at the present time.

The all-absorbing topic of interest is the coming Democratic primaries to be held on March 25th to select candidates for Governor and other State officers, and also U. S. Senator, said nominations being equivalent to an election. In this State we have in effect practically the election of Tj. S. Senator by a direct vote of the people. Jeffrey Davis, the present Governor, is trying to attain the Senatorship now held by that grand old man and Ex-Confederate veteran, James H. Berry.

A great many persons are under the impression that Davis' given name is Jefferson, which is not the case, nor is he related to the late ex-President of the Confederacy. It has even been stated that his father was not in the Confederate Army. For that I cannot vouch. To have a civil war record is a distinction that nothing else equals in the South today.

The prosecuting of the Legislative boodlers is still dragging along, though there has been but one actual conviction as yet. Senator Butt has been languishing in Pulaski County jail for the past ten days, committed there by Judge Lea, of the Circuit Court for contempt of Court in refusing to answer certain questions propounded by Prosecuting Attorney Lewis Rhoton. This refusal to answer was before the Grand Jury, and it has been intimated in the daily papers here that it might be possible to get the whole Legislature, or at least a majority of it, in jail, if it were summoned before the Grand Jury to tell what it knows about "boodling." Yet after all the exposure there seems to be very little enthusiasm here in favor of adopting direct Legislation, which would in a large measure be a remedy for Legislative corruption.

Our townsman, Judge N. M. Rose, has been recently appointed by the President on the Hague Peace Commission, along with General Horace Porter and Judge Cboate. Judge Rose is a very eminent lawyer and a very unobtrusive gentleman, and was at one time President of the National Bar Association.

Eugene V. Debs lectured in Little Rock on the evening of the 16th inst. I knew Debs when he was secretary and treasurer of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen and editor of their magazine some fifteen years ago. I went to hear him lecture. He had a very fair audience and spoke for about two hours, his subject being "The Impending Crisis." The lecture was brilliant throughout, and his comments on our barbarous civilization were well put, but his proposed remedy seemed so impractical, though he used the argument of Wiltshire with a good deal of effect, that our industrial system would fall of its own weight for the reason that we create so much faster than we consume. He quoted John D. Rockefeller as predicting within a short time the greatest panic the country has ever seen. There is one thing certain, and that is the followers of Marx and Engels do not lack in enthusiasm. In Little Rock at the coming spring election the Socialists will have a full ticket for city officers, being opposed only by the Democrats.

A few days ago I met a gentleman in a barber shop with whom some four or five years ago I used to talk Single Tax and who was then very bitter against it. In speaking of Debs, he remarked that he could not go Socialism, it was entirely too radical, but he told me in confidence that the only remedy for our economic ills lay in the adoption of the ideas laid down in *Progress and Poverty* and went on to instruct me as if I had never heard of it before. He had forgotten where he had imbibed the idea. I think the agitation made by the Socialist movement will cause many persons to think, and will ultimately be the means of bringing many adherents to the Single Tax ranks, for the reason that it is the least revolutionary, and of the two systems more easily put into operation.

Little Rock. Robert Heriot.