

on 12th Avenue and 125 feet on Fir Street, was purchased in 1909, for \$2,150. It cost \$50.00 to clear it. The owner erected a dwelling at a cost of \$2,500 on the area. He assures me that he could sell it for \$5,500, and move the house off. He has contracted for the building of an apartment house on the front of the lot. The lot is assessed at \$1,500, the contiguous lot of the same area is assessed at \$1,200. No sewers, pavements or sidewalks are in these streets at this point. The corner lot in the same block facing on 11th Avenue along Fir Street is assessed at \$1,375, the next five contiguous lots at \$1,100 each. The east side of this block faces on Granville Street, and here the lots are 27 x 120 in dimensions, fronting on Granville. The first two lots at each corner are assessed together at \$6,250; the inside 27 feet lots, at \$2,625.

A lot was purchased in 1907, on Broadway, on the Fairview Belt Line, a business street running parallel with 8th and 10th Avenues, between them, connecting Granville and Main Streets, south of False Creek for \$1,100.00. The owner has refused \$10,000 for it, and is holding it at \$15,000. It is assessed for 1911, at \$3,000. In the Workingmen's Division put on the market in 1909, by the C. P. R. and sold on easy terms with certain restrictions and conditions, lots are assessed at \$550; corner lots at \$690. It is the policy of the C. P. R. to require the purchaser to improve and build on the lots they sell within a given time. They reserve a certain number of lots in each block, knowing that the improvements will enhance the value of the lots reserved.

The assessment values given here are taken from the assessor's books and are authentic. The information as to the sale of lots and prices thereof unless otherwise stated, was derived from the most reputable firms engaged in the real estate business in Vancouver; not from memory, but by referring to books where sales were recorded. I was informed in the assessors office in Los Angeles County that you could not even depend on the recorded price of realty sales, as it was customary there for the vendor and purchaser to agree on a fictitious price to be recorded, to assist in bulling the market. My investigation

was careful, and while errors of statement may have been made, or may have been misunderstood, I am confident the reports as given are as accurate an index of values as can be made.

AN INTERVIEW WITH VAN- COUVER'S MAYOR.

EVIDENCE THAT HE THOROUGHLY COMPRE-
HENDS THE PHILOSOPHY OF HENRY
GEORGE AND BELIEVES IN MAKING A
PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF IT.

(For the Review.)

By LUTHER S. DICKEY.

It is evident that Mayor Taylor has a pretty thorough grasp of the philosophy of Henry George as is indicated in a recent interview I had with him.

"While there may be some danger of over speculation, in Vancouver," he said, "I do not think there is any cause for alarm at this tendency. Speculation in Vancouver has reached its height and at the present time very little property is changing hands for purposes other than for building and improving, most of the property being purchased by people desirous of erecting homes for themselves.

"Suburban property, you no doubt have observed, is very high, but there are no indications of a tendency to unload at a concession of the original purchase price.

"Mr. Joseph Fels, while here, suggested that there should be a general agitation made for public improvements, such as better streets, improved street car facilities, and other improvements of like nature, with a view to raising the present tax rate of 2 per cent. It will be quite a number of years before the street car service can be taken under municipal control as the existing agreement with the traction company does not expire until 1918, and negotiations are now pending for an extension of the company's franchise.

"In regard to street improvements, and other public works, they are being projected at a more rapid rate, and on a much larger scale, than ever before, and at the present

time practically all the available laborers who can be handled are being employed by the city. The pay rolls for the past two months were the largest in the history of Vancouver and shortly when operations are in full blast, we expect to be employing four or five thousand men on public improvement work, as against three thousand men last year.

✧ While I thoroughly believe in Henry George's theory of taxing land values, at the same time I am urging the policy of gradually educating the people in the same manner as the abolition of the tax on improvements was effected. The situation in Vancouver is most probable unique. There are so many lines of railroads headed for the Terminal City that there can be no great reaction until their completion, which will not be before five or six years at the least. Then one has to consider the dormant stores of natural resources, some of them as yet practically untouched. These are bound to contribute in no small measure to the future development of this city, as Vancouver is acknowledged to be the financial centre of the Province of British Columbia, and consequently promoters of large enterprises must perforce come here; and also send most of their products as well as obtain their supplies.

"Recently the City Council appointed a special commission to revise the assessment rolls, and the members have been instructed to place their assessment at practically the market value of the land. By so doing the revenue next year will be greatly increased and the City will be able to project public improvement work on a much larger scale than they were able to do this year. It is estimated that by raising the assessment the City's borrowing power will be increased by between five and six million dollars, as compared with the increase in the borrowing power for the years 1911 and 1910, which was only four millions. This indicates our policy of expansion, and I assure you it is our intention to expand as much as possible each year along the same line. Naturally, the interest on the sinking fund will cause an increase in the rate of taxation. I have no fears whatever that Vancouver's prosperity will come to a

sudden collapse through inflated land values."

At the conclusion of the interview, Mayor Taylor reverted to Provincial affairs, saying, "I have no doubt that in the very near future the Province of British Columbia will follow in the footsteps of Vancouver and derive its entire revenue by a Single Tax on the natural resources of the Province, and absolutely and entirely abolish the poll tax, personal property tax, the tax on improvements and buildings on land and on incomes below \$5,000. It might be wise to continue this tax for a time on exceptionally large incomes, but it will ultimately have to go."

In making this last reservation as to incomes the Mayor was no doubt speaking rather as a politician than as an economist, for immediately following this statement he continued: "If I were to enter into Provincial politics I would make the taxation of the natural resources of the Province, and the abolition of all other taxes,—save that of excessive incomes,—the cardinal issue. I would advocate having a complete survey of the lands of the Province into small holdings—from 25 to 160 acres—and assist in settling the country by using the millions of dollars now lying dormant in the Provincial treasury in building trails, roads, etc.; I would advocate assisting settlers to establish homes by loaning them small sums from the Provincial treasury. There is no part of the Western continent which has such a wealth of undeveloped, yet undoubted natural resources as this Western maritime Province. It is not only rich in materials with the most extensive coal deposits in the world, but it has many millions of acres of most excellent grain land, lands adapted to raising fruits, and cattle as well as grain, and I believe that it is the province of wise statesmanship to foster and encourage the pioneer settler in establishing a comfortable home, rather than subsidizing large corporations whose chief aim is to exploit the masses by levying tribute from them to the extent that they can bear. By establishing such a policy the population of this province would grow, as Vancouver has grown, and we would soon demonstrate to the people of the

world that the only true policy of conserving the natural resources of a country is by making these resources contribute equally to all the people of the country in providing the revenue necessary to maintain the government in all its necessary and useful functions. The resources of this Province are ample to maintain in comfort ten millions of people, and I predict that she will follow the lead of Vancouver—and that at no distant day—in the abolition of all taxes on industry, enterprise and thrift, and transfer the burdens of government to the natural resources of the Province, thus making her citizens equal heirs to the Creator's free gift to all the children of men”.

HON. HENRY GEORGE, JR., IN VANCOUVER.

Henry George, Jr., while in Vancouver was interviewed by the *News-Advertiser* of that city. The interview is thus reported:

In regard to Single Tax, Mr. George stated that it carried with it the consideration of the tariff question, and of all matters of taxation and production. It meant one tax in lieu of many taxes wanted for revenue purposes, and fell upon land values, irrespective of improvements; that was, it meant the appropriation into the public treasury of the site value of the ground, which was entirely apart from any value given to the land by the laborer or the owner. The Single Tax was a means to transfer it to the public treasury and thereby in effect make society the common owner of the land.

Of course, said Mr. George, no transfer of actual titles or change of present tenancy was involved except such as followed the application of the tax upon the value of the holdings, less the value of any improvements whatsoever. As a matter of truth, the tax now existed, and was applied to ground values. What was required in the case of Vancouver was that the full market value of the land should be made, for as taxation now existed it applied to seventy-five per cent. of the true value. This assessment should be increased

practically to one hundred per cent. and then that one hundred per cent. should be taxed so as to absorb into the public coffers practically the whole of the annual potential rent. This took the kernel of the nut.

If that were done, not only would all the present needs for revenue be supplied, but a great surplus revenue would be furnished. In addition to this revenue result, land speculation would be destroyed for no man would hold valuable land vacant for a rise in value if that value was to be taxed out of his hands into the public treasury. On the contrary, he would be penalised into using his land to its highest capacity and then re-leasing it to whoever would so use it. Much valuable land now left out of use through speculation would be thrown upon the market, and down would go the general value, to the very great benefit of the community generally, for it would mean opening natural opportunities now held closed.

What business sought was a minimum of tax burdens. Vancouver had already removed all taxation from improvements on land, and should now increase taxation upon ground values with the end of obtaining revenue for common purposes, and the squeezing out of land speculative values. British Columbia might justly claim to be, in the advance she has made along these lines, one of the most progressive countries in the world. He saluted her, and begged her to advance and lead further along the road of progress.

“It may interest you to know?” stated Mr. George, “that I was elected last November as a Single Tax free trade Democrat in the Seventeenth New York State district, receiving more than 2,200 majority over the gentleman who, in the preceding election, defeated the Democratic candidate by more than 8,000. My opponent was Mr. William S. Bennett, a Republican who opposed reciprocity with Canada, and the day following introduced the resolution for annexation. He was overwhelmingly repudiated, the resolution being immediately referred to one of the standing committees, and was next day reported out of committee and indignantly and utterly discarded by a vote of ten to one.”