

Since the Oregon proposition is not singletax, the statement about Alberta is irrelevant, even if it were true—and it is not true. No place in Alberta that has adopted the singletax has gone back to taxation of personal property and improvements. Nor is it true that municipal singletax caused any suffering in Alberta. The statement is the more inexcusable because the writer of it says: "I was up there and made a thorough investigation of the entire situation." Another assertion is that "Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Iowa and one or two other States are successfully taxing intangible wealth." Residents of those states will feel on reading that, that it is necessary to go to Oregon to learn the facts concerning the working of their tax systems.

S. D.



### Tax Restriction and Prohibition.

Ohio votes this fall on prohibition. Since the liquor business contributes several millions annually to the revenues of the State, the question comes up how to make up this loss should the prohibitory amendment be adopted. The prohibitionists usually have an answer ready. The deficit can be made up by levying taxes on something else than liquor. But they are estopped in Ohio from answering thus this fall. There is pending in addition to prohibition a proposition to limit local tax rates to one per cent and under certain conditions to one and a half per cent. The adoption of this amendment will make impossible any increase in the tax rate. In many cases it will compel a reduction regardless of local needs. Even with the revenue from liquor licenses this tax restriction amendment, initiated by the State Board of Commerce, will cripple and perhaps bankrupt many localities. If in addition they should be deprived of liquor revenue their condition will be desperate indeed. It is the plain duty of those who support prohibition to defeat the tax restriction.



Clearly insincere is the plea in its behalf made by the State Board of Commerce, that "it will make the singletax impossible." The Ohio Constitution already makes impossible any other system than the general property tax. No amendment is needed to prevent the singletax—even if that plea were anything more than an appeal to ignorance. What the State Board of Commerce has concealed is the fact that it will make impracticable, if not impossible, any important change of any kind. It will benefit none but monopolistic interests, which will be protected from increased taxation and from municipal ownership movements.

S. D.

### Woman Voters and Progressive Policies.

An active force for progressive legislation in Illinois is the Woman's Party of Cook County. This organization is not, as its name might indicate, a political party, but a non-partisan organization working for measures of interest to all citizens. During the primary campaign it has been busy questioning candidates, especially those for legislative positions. The questions asked relate to the candidate's position on the Initiative, Referendum, Recall, full suffrage for women, reform of primary election laws, short ballot and other matters. On the taxation question the advanced position of the organization is shown by the following question: "Do you favor an amendment to the constitution to reduce or abolish the tax on personal property, and improvements, and increase the tax on land values?" A woman's organization engaged in such work is in itself a refutation of the doleful prophecies uttered by opponents of equal suffrage concerning alleged bad effects of that reform.

S. D.



### THOUGHTS FOR LABOR DAY.

What constitutes useful service, labor, the effort of which is to be rewarded, can be readily determined by society; and the value of such service, the wealth which should go to any particular man for the labor he has performed, will be easily enough measured when society is free to act upon its own desires and is not forced to either extortion or tribute by any form of monopoly, special privilege or compulsion. When a man may sell, unhindered and unaided, his services or the products of his labor to other men, and receive the full economic value therefor, there will be no difficulty in determining what constitutes valuable service or valuable product, or in determining the value of either of these.

A condition under which this may be done is not so difficult of attainment. It is indeed comparatively easy. Primarily, and probably exclusively except for some minor regulation, we have simply to abolish private property in the location value of land. Since that value exists and must inevitably continue to exist so long as society itself continues we cannot abolish the value, but we can nullify the unnatural and absurd private claim to it by taking it in the form of a tax for the benefit of society which creates it. When that is done, there will no longer stand at the elbow of every man selling his labor, his wares, his services—synonymous terms—that relentless even if not always readily distinguishable foe of progress and

justice, the collector of tribute for the right to live and to labor. When that is done, the fields of human activities, "the earth and the fullness thereof," which belong to God and his expression, man, will be open and free for the production of wealth, for the rendering of service without hindrance, tribute or connivance. And the value of a man's service, of his work, of the product of his labor, in any line, will depend wholly upon his intelligence and his effort. Other people, society in other words, will pay for it according to its desirableness. The real law of supply and demand, now so loosely mentioned and so rarely comprehended, would at once become operative and unhampered.



With our present social perversions, the distinguishing of real service and the estimating of its value is an intricate and perplexing task, more especially to those who have not given over-much thought to the fundamentals of social economics. Thus it is that mere activity often passes for labor; that mere shrewdness in getting is often mistaken for the service of producing; that mere accumulating on the part of one, even if at the cost of great privation for the many, is counted evidence of superiority, even of superiority of service rendered, somehow.

A farm land speculator justifies a large profit to himself by recounting the fact that he was obliged to "work hard" to sell his land. The speculative, hazard-taking Alaska gold mine owner justifies his large profits on the ground that his search for the mine was strenuous, dangerous and uncertain of results. The manipulator of railroad securities justifies his enormous profits by counting them merely fair returns for his expert services in business shrewdness. But none of these, nor any like them, as farm land speculators or gold mine owners or stock manipulators have rendered any service or produced anything that society wants or would normally pay for. The farm land speculator was merely forestalling the man who would render service and making him pay for the privilege of doing a good thing, in other words for being a farmer. The gold mine owner assumed his risks and his hardships of his own volition, for the chance of possibly finding a bit of the earth's surface to be taken for his own from which he may be made rich by the labor of others. And it is interesting and illuminative as well in this connection to recall the fact that for each and every dollar's worth of gold that has been brought out of Alaska upward of two dollars and seventy cents has been expended in getting it, exclusive of the labor in the mines. The manipulator of rail-

road securities has merely swollen the capitalization on which profits must be paid—paid by the public. Despite their efforts, or their acumen, or their talents may these be said to have rendered any valuable service for which society would voluntarily pay? Not so that it would be observed.

Under a condition of freedom, absolute freedom of opportunity for every worthy effort, there will be no difficulty in determining the value of a man's services, of his labor, regardless of whether he is a switch-tender or a railroad president, a herdsman or a lecturer on scientific farming, a gold digger or an assayer. Society will cheerfully pay, competitively, just what a man's services are worth, and, incidentally, society will be circumstanced to pay well.

ROBERT S. DOUBLEDAY.

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## EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE

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### MAINE POLITICS.

Lubec, Me., September 1, 1914.

Fourteen days before the biennial election in Maine finds the political atmosphere filled with auguries and strange portents. To one who has passed through campaigns of recent years in the Pine Tree state, the situation which confronts the voters today is one of the most complicated that they have ever been asked to solve.

The Hale-Burleigh party (for that is really all that the Maine G. O. P. now stands for) is moving heaven and earth to regain all the power lost in the state and nation by the insurgent movement of 1910, which retired the Republican leader, Senator Hale, to private life. The mistake of Progressives in forming an alliance with Governor Haines and Senator Burleigh in 1912-13, whereby those reactionary leaders were elected to their respective positions, has been the means of giving Hale the chance to again seize the reins of power. The Progressives have a splendid ticket in the field, but it is simply a protest against the G. O. P. machine, and serves no other purpose than to keep the party intact for the 1916 presidential race, when they hope to push Roosevelt into the White House.

The Republican leaders have been hunting for an issue with which to discredit President Wilson and the Democrats. Congressman Peters, the Hale leader, viciously attacked the President's Mexican policy in the Republican state convention several months ago, when "watchful waiting" hung in the balance. Since the situation in Mexico has completely vindicated President Wilson's farsighted statesmanship, Mr. Peters probably wishes he had not been so forward in his advice. Hence the entire state and national campaign by the Republican leaders is being made on the tariff and the ever present prohibition issues.

Governor Haines was an out-and-out anti-Prohibition leader before being elected. Since then he has been endorsed by practically every county W. C. T. U. convention, save Washington, and supported for reelection. An attempt was made to secure the passage