

can distributing prizes each month to pupils of the city's high schools for the best papers on the Singletax and the plan is being taken up and put into effect in other cities of Illinois. And now the New York State Singletax League has formed the Collegiate Singletax League with headquarters at 68 William street, New York City, and is offering prizes to undergraduates of the State's colleges for the three best essays on the Singletax whether favorable or otherwise. There is room for further extension of such work and it is not unreasonable to suppose that before long similar encouragement will be offered students everywhere to acquire definite knowledge of the principles of the science of political economy.

S. D.



### The Truth About Edmonton.

In reporting on Edmonton's tax system, United States Consul Reat of Calgary seems to have been under some erroneous impressions. His report was so worded as to convey the idea that of \$3,000,000 taxes levied for 1913 \$1,000,000 was delinquent. Even if true this would not have been to the discredit of the system, although some papers in the United States, including the *Providence Journal*, imagined that it was. The *Journal's* statements were brought to the attention of the officials of Edmonton by Mr. H. B. Cowan, editor of *Farm and Dairy*, an agricultural paper issued at Peterboro, Ontario. Mr. Cowan received the following reply from the acting mayor of Edmonton, Mr. H. R. Smith, under date of November 23:

There is a systematic campaign in the United States against western Canadian development. This is presumably to be expected.

The editorial of the *Providence Journal* is, unfortunately, very far astray, as our system of Singletax is very limited and is not the Henry George system at all. All our utilities are a direct charge on the user, and not on the landowner. We operate briefly as follows:

1. Capital monies are raised by by-laws approved by the burgesses.
2. Interest and sinking fund charges on capital monies and the capital expenses of the civic administration (including the Hospital Board, the Public Library Board and the School Board) are defrayed from land taxes and revenues from the various utilities, all of which are owned and operated by the municipality.
3. Taxes are derived from land only, no account being taken of any improvements, other than local improvements, payment for which is spread over a number of years, according to the lifetime of the improvement.
4. The tax rate is struck by the City Council according to the estimated needs of the city.
5. The assessment of the various parcels of property is determined by the City Assessor, and the

value is estimated from the current market price.

With regard to the accusation that our taxation system is responsible for the slump, the *Providence Journal* seems to be laboring under the fallacy of false cause. We have never claimed that our growth from five thousand to seventy-two thousand five hundred was only due to the direct tax on land, although we have more logical right to do so than those who would explain the present financial depression as due to the same cause.

The \$1,000,000 unpaid taxes represents the accumulation of ten years, which makes a difference. There is no agitation for any great tax reform from within the city, and in case of failure I presume that we might expect this.

Since Edmonton has only made land values the sole source of local taxation since 1912, it is clear that ten years accumulation of delinquent taxes cannot be charged against the existing system. If it can be correctly said to discredit any system it must discredit the methods in force before the present one was adopted. Consul Reat should correct the false impression he has allowed to go out. Of course, the same may also be expected of the *Providence Journal*, *Los Angeles Times* and other papers which have misinformed their readers.

S. D.

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## EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE

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### SUMMARY OF OREGON RESULTS.

Portland, Oregon, November, 27, 1914.

The returns of the recent election are now so nearly complete that we can safely begin to study the meaning of the votes on measures and men. Four measures were approved and twenty-five rejected.

It was a Republican year for candidates. There is less chance for an Independent candidate in Oregon under the Direct Primary than there was formerly under the convention system. Very many electors will vote for a candidate's measures, who will not vote for the candidate, unless he is on one of the great party tickets. I was an Independent candidate for Governor, and received 10,493 votes in a total of 248,052. For the \$1,500 Homes Tax Exemption amendment my name was first in the ballot title, and 64,825 voted for the measure. I received 4 per cent of the total vote for Governor, but this measure, which was universally opposed as being mine, received 33 per cent of the votes on that question. It appears that no Independent candidate was elected to any office.

A bill was submitted by initiative petition to provide for election of delegates to party conventions to recommend candidates for their party nominations, and to repeal the Presidential Primary law. On this measure there were 178,238 votes, and it was rejected by a majority of six to one.

The electors are developing higher ideals of political morals and citizens' duties. Prohibition was adopted by about 36,000 majority, and 95 per cent of all who went to the polls voted on the question. This was the seventh vote on Prohibition measures in this State, and the first time the women voted on the question. It was rejected in 1910 by 22,000 majority.

The death penalty was abolished by less than 500 majority. Two years ago such a measure was rejected by about 20,000 majority.

A measure limiting the voting rights to naturalized citizens who have received their final papers, and to native born citizens, was adopted by a majority of four to one.

On a measure declaring the duty of the State to employ any citizen on demand, and levy a high inheritance tax to provide funds, 57,652 voted "YES" and 125,332 voted "NO." This indicates a very strong radical sentiment on the unemployment question.



Some of the Singletaxers, including A. D. Cridge, G. M. Orton, H. D. Wagnon, Will Daly and myself, initiated the amendment to exempt every person on \$1,500 of the total assessed value of his or her dwelling house and other labor values of property used to make a living.

H. D. Wagnon, G. M. Orton and other Singletaxers initiated a measure levying a graduated sur-tax on the values of land and other natural resources.

Both of these measures were opposed wholly on the ground that they were the beginning of the Single Tax. On the \$1,500 Exemption 64,825 voted "YES" and 134,291 voted "NO." On the sur-tax measure 59,390 voted "YES" and 123,697 voted "NO." Both were defeated by practically a two to one majority of those voting on the questions.



The Anti-Singletaxers offered four measures, two submitted by the Legislature for the State Tax Commission, and two by initiative petition. The first two were rejected by majorities of two to one, and this was the third time they had been rejected by the people. The third measure was proposed by initiative petition to create a special tax commission to draft a new tax code for the Legislature; this was rejected by a vote of four to one. The fourth was a constitutional amendment intended to make Single Tax impossible, and was rejected by a majority of three to one. The majority vote against Anti-Singletax measures grows with each succeeding election.

The vote in favor of the measures offered by Singletaxers grows from one election to another. This year they were defeated by two to one majorities. Two years ago they were beaten by eight to three majorities.

This year the whole amount spent for the \$1,500 exemption measure, including the cost of the petition, was about \$800. Anti-Singletaxers probably spent at least \$20,000. One of their leagues reported expenses of nearly \$9,000. The Anti-Singletaxers also opposed the measure to abolish the State Senate and provide Proportional Representation for election of representatives in the Legislature.

The people of Oregon are not ready for any forward political step. The measures to abolish the State Senate and provide a method of Proportional Representation for electing representatives in the Legislature were rejected by majorities of two to one and three to one respectively.

In my opinion this election in Oregon should greatly encourage the progressives and radicals to continue their work. It is true that we won only Prohibition and abolition of the death penalty, but we did not lose anything. The other fellows gained nothing at all, except the election of officers. That is something for them, but their candidates all professed so much faith in the Oregon System, and promised so faithfully to protect it, that there is probably no danger of our losing much under the incoming administration. If the reactionaries had elected the Governor four years ago with the Legislature they did elect, Oregon would have gone back a long, long way by this time. The Fels Fund saved us from that fate, and thus made possible the victories in California and Ohio. In our campaign four years ago the Oregon System was an issue, and the Republican candidates were opposed to it. In the recent campaign everyone seeking an office, from the Governor down, professed very great admiration for the Peoples Power System.

Remembering that there were from seventy-five to ninety thousand women voting this year, most of whom had given little or no attention to politics or economics until this campaign, there is surely every reason for progressives to take heart of grace, and this is especially true of the Singletaxers.

In closing, I wish to express my opinion that the best work that can be done for the Single Tax movement hereafter, in Oregon at least, is to submit at every election a straight Single Tax measure.

W. S. U'REN.

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## INCIDENTAL SUGGESTIONS

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### THE MIDDLEMAN

Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts, Dec. 5.

Apropos of middlemen, and the possibility of economic loss from having too many of them, it may be said that we should probably have fewer were the artificial scarcity of employment removed by the freeing of natural opportunities. The job of the middleman looks like "easy money" to many who shrink from the hardships of daily manual toil as wage earners in a society where the seizure of natural opportunities has created artificial scarcity of employment. Each man who attempts to keep a little shop hopes that he is destined to succeed where many have failed, and here and there the able man with the instinct of the monopolist and a minimum of conscience sees the opportunity to drive out his competitors and profit by the privilege of controlling a considerable market. Open natural opportunities and men will be less tempted by the gambling chance of the small shopkeeper, so that communities will have as many middlemen as they need and no more. The Singletax is no cure-all, but freedom and economic justice will give men the chance to show what is in them, to develop up to