

THE FREE SILVER ISSUE

By REXAT ELONIS.

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To the student of political economy, particularly the more advanced one, belonging to the George School of Philosophy—the primary cause leading to the agitation of most economic questions and particularly the present absorbing one of Free Silver, is perhaps more easily apparent than to any other class of economists.

The great producing classes of the United States are gradually beginning to recognize the fact that their interests have not been safeguarded by either of the two political parties, that while "America" and "Liberty" have been extolled for his benefit on all possible occasions, their pockets somehow or other were being depleted, or rather were not being refilled with coin to meet the common desires for food, raiment and shelter. They also seem to appreciate the fact, that while they are growing poorer, yet toiling harder than ever, a comparatively few in numbers are growing richer and more powerful, but to all appearances never seem to do anything at all.

They have looked for aid and sympathy from one party to another, and it never came. Fooled and disappointed, —desperate, and intent upon getting some relief, no matter where it comes from—is it to be wondered at that the masses should grasp at anything that will likely better conditions? If the producing classes are laboring under a delusion, and are misled into favoring absurd legislation, and by their strength vote in a government to carry out absurd and unwise proposals, who must assume the responsibilities for it? Certainly not these fettered slaves, who have so long and so often been despoiled and robbed!

And why should not Mr. Bryan and his party be supported by them? There is at least a ray of hope that in doing so some relief will be secured. But at the expense of others, some one will remark. Very well, at whose expense are the land monopolist money lords and tariff beneficiaries being kept now? There is only one answer to this—the producers.

To effect the cry of repudiation of obligations, dishonest money, etc., at this time, comes with a show of ingratitude to say the least. While we do not endorse the free silver proposition, we will endorse any movement that tends to the breaking down of special privileges, and in the silver agitation this view is recognized. As a consequence the money power of the United States, if Mr. Bryan should be elected, will have to forego some of its privileges. In what form this will follow, time alone can tell.

The unfortunate part of this extraordinary movement in the United States is the fact, though not generally recognized, that the common people do not realize what is really the matter with them. That something is wrong goes without question. In some quarters the mind of the people is being directed to the basic cause of hard times, but the easy acceptance of silverite doctrines claims the great majority. Some day, and perhaps not far distant, the real cause and the remedy will strike them with all the force and certainly with more clearness than the superficial question of free silver. The remarks of Hon. Tom L. Johnson, ex-Congressman of Ohio, and millionaire manufacturer of steel rails, very recently expressed, give utterance to our views in the matter, when he says:—

"The present hard times have been felt all over the world, in countries of low tariffs and high tariffs; in countries with little money and those with plenty of money; in monarchies and in republics. The real cause cannot be tariffs, or money, or form of government, it is something that we find everywhere—the monopoly of land, the source of all production."—B.



WILLIAM J. BRYAN.

Australian Legislation

OUR AUSTRALIAN COUSINS.

The editor of this department has recently received two letters from Australia, which contain matter of much interest. One is from Bert Stevens of the Single Tax newspaper, 112 King-street, Sydney, New South Wales, and the other is from Miss Catherine Helen Spence, of Eldon, St. Peters, South Australia. Very appropriate for a letter to Canada, Mr. Stevens' letter is dated July 1. Dealing first with the

TAX ON LAND VALUES

in New South Wales, Mr. Stevens states its exact position. A few weeks ago this department estimated it at two and a half mills on the dollar. This was based on a misconception, and we are glad to state that the tax is really about four mills on the dollar, instead of two and a half. It is a penny in the pound on capital value—say two cents on five dollars. Twenty mills on five dollars equals four mills on the dollar. Buildings and other improvements are not included in the tax, of course. However, we will let Mr. Stevens speak for himself. He says:—

The tax on land values in force in New South Wales is one penny (about two cents) in the pound sterling of capital value on all values over and above £240—in round figures, twelve hundred dollars—that being the amount of the exemption. The income tax is sixpence in the pound, and £200 is exempted—say a thousand dollars. So that you may have a complete and clear knowledge of the matter, I forward you herewith copy of the Land and Income Acts.

The exemption in the Land Tax Act rolls the effect of it to a very great extent, and we Single Tax men are concentrating our energies on the effort to get the exemption abolished altogether. There is little hope of getting the amount of the tax increased just yet, but if the exemption is removed we shall be in a fairly satisfactory position. The time allowed for the continuance of the old revenue and protective duties has almost expired; and, with the expiration of duties on tobacco, alcoholic liquors, etc., we shall have a free port.

LOCAL OPTION IN TAXATION.

We have not got local option in taxation yet. The present Government was pledged to introduce a local Government Bill, and did so, but the labor party wanted to eliminate the provision for the property

vote, and make municipal suffrage similar to our Parliamentary suffrage—one man, one vote. The Government opposed this, and the bill was dropped; but I believe it will be brought forward again in such a form as to allow the municipalities the option of raising their revenue in what way they wish. I will send you along particulars if anything occurs.

"I am editing the New South Wales Single Tax, and send you a copy of our last issue."

IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

The letter of Miss Spence confirms the foregoing statements, and gives particulars about South Australia. There the tax on land values is one half-penny in the pound, equal to two mills on the dollar, and there is no exemption. She says:—

"South Australia is the only colony where there are no exemptions. I pay the land value tax on a rood of ground where this house stands, and half an acre where another house stands, and both together come to one pound and six shillings. The tax is only one half-penny in the pound, but it is doubled when the land is worth more than five thousand pounds, for the portion which is above that value; and twenty per cent. is charged for absentees in addition to what they pay like residents."

To illustrate this in mills and dollars, an absentee land owner, having an estate of which the land was worth fifty thousand dollars, would pay:

- Two mills on the dollar on \$25,000.
- Four mills on the dollar on \$25,000.
- Two-fifths of a mill on the dollar on \$50,000.

Nothing on his buildings and improvements.

THE DELAWARE ELECTIONS

Never before has an election been so important in Delaware as will be the approaching one, even to the politicians. The winning side will control the constitutional convention and probably make such changes in the constitution as will enable it to have a strong grip on the political situation for a long time to come. The next legislature will also elect a United States senator, and the governor will have more offices to distribute than any governor had in the past thirty years. The party that gets the Single Tax support will win beyond a doubt.

Success for Single Tax is assured in Newcastle and Kent Counties, with a probability of Sussex, provided the Single Taxers themselves make no mistakes, follow up advantages already gained and do not permit themselves to be blinded and led into wrong moves by enemies disguised as friends. The political leaders understand this, although they will not admit it openly.