

NEWS DOMESTIC

RHODE ISLAND

Mr. James R. Brown, of New York, has again favored us with nearly a week's stay in Providence. He addressed fifteen different audiences, including The People's Forum on Sunday evening.

On Monday he spoke before the Congregational clergymen, and the Business Men's Association of East Providence.

On Tuesday he addressed an advanced class in political economy at Brown University, and debated in the evening before the People's Council.

Wednesday he spoke four times, namely, at Normal School, Friends School, Business College and in the evening a Men's Club.

Thursday, the Woman Suffragists, a college society and the Providence Grange.

Friday, an Elementary class in political economy at Brown University and in the evening two labor Unions.

Unusual interest has been manifested by his hearers.—LUCIUS F. C. GARVIN.

A MINOR CENTER OF ACTIVITY

Pomona, California, is a city of some fifteen thousand population, in the center of the orange belt, 34 miles east of Los Angeles. It is within close view of the snow-capped San Gabriel mountains and within easy reach on the east and south of the famous orange center cities of San Bernardino, Riverside and Redlands. Pomona is in Los Angeles County.

In this attractive residential city is a large corner lot facing on North Park and Orange Grove Avenues. Facing on each of the avenues is a neat little signboard containing the legend. "Residence of Rev. Chas. Hardon, New-Church and Single Tax Books and Tracts," and in the inner corner of this lot is a neat little cottage, which is the present center of the Pomona Single Tax League's activities.

Rev. Charles Hardon, a retired minister of the New Church (Swedenborgian) is President of the Pomona Single Tax League

and this cottage, surrounded by growing crops in the garden, in view of the laden orange orchards and snow-capped peaks, is the center from which much Single Tax educational work is spreading throughout the city. Mr. Harold Wittemore, Secretary of the League, is a quiet unassuming man, filled with a deep, earnest and persistent enthusiasm for the Single Tax cause. He is a retired farmer from Idaho making his permanent home in Pomona in the interest of the health of his family. The care of an invalid daughter necessitates his going about a great deal through the city. In these journeyings he goes loaded with Single Tax arguments and a pocket full of Single Tax pamphlets and booklets. He is never at a loss to tackle doctors, lawyers, ministers, artisan laborers and tradespeople in the interest of the Single Tax.

TEXAS SINGLE TAXERS ORGANIZE

The first Single Tax Conference of Texas adjourned March 17, having held a two-day session in Dallas, during which time a "Declaration of Economic Independence" was prepared and addressed to the people of Texas, a Single Tax amendment to the State constitution was formulated, and a permanent state organization for the promotion of Single Tax propaganda was perfected.

Among those who participated in the Conference were the following: B. W. Lauderdale, Wayland; W. T. Ramsey, Canton; J. W. Canada, LaPorte; R. Bedichek, Austin; J. J. Pastoriza, Houston; T. E. Campbell, Center; A. H. McCarty, Ft. Worth; Wm. A. Black and E. G. LeSturgeon, San Antonio; R. G. Hollingsworth, Coleman; R. L. Cable, St. John; and the following from Dallas; W. Gano Compere (elected secretary of the conference); Thos. W. Hopkins, J. B. Dixon, Dr. J. S. Fisher, Harry Ryan, Travis Campbell, R. B. Anderson, F. O. Brown, John Davis, Wilford B. Smith, Chas. E. Trimble, W. S. Mitchell, S. W. Turner, Herbert Stellmacher, P. F. Paige, R. J. Nelson, Richard Potts, Frank V. Labountie, J. G.

Morrow, Wm. Young, E. V. Willis, and Rev. George Gilmore.

The State organization decided upon at the Dallas conference includes an executive secretary to which position Wm. A. Black, 211 Fifth St., San Antonio, was elected, and a State chairman, R. Bedichek, University Station, Austin, Texas. The name chosen for the organization is: "Single Tax League of Texas." Upon these two gentlemen the active conduct of the League was imposed by the conference, although a large committee is now being secured which, when completed, will include representatives from each senatorial district in the State. Hon. J. J. Pastoriza was chosen treasurer of the league.

The following was issued and given to the press at the close of the first day's conference:

"A declaration of economic independence addressed to the people of Texas from the first State conference of Single Taxers held at Dallas, March 16th and 17th, 1916:

"We call your attention to these indisputable facts: 1. There are now 250,000 tenant farmers in Texas with an annual increase of some five thousand. 2. Seventy-five per cent of the homes in our larger cities are rented or mortgaged. 3. Renters in our smaller cities and towns are increasing every year. 4. Wage-earners are restless and are rightfully demanding better pay and a higher standard of living. The menace of unemployment is constantly becoming more acute in Texas. 5. Interest rates are high and the cost of living is going up every year. 6. Industry is hampered and the business man of small means is being wiped out. 7. Palliative, or makeshift measures have proved failures—the cancer of serfdom is eating into the agricultural industry of the State, while labor and unprivileged capital are constantly being forced into a position of greater and greater subservience to monopolistic groups and individuals.

"Believing, as we do, that the seven counts in the above indictment constitute a menace to our civilization, we demand as a prime measure of relief that our State

constitution be amended so that State, county and municipal revenues be derived from a tax on land values, relieving thereby from taxation all improvements in or on land and all other products of labor.

"The coming fight on taxation of land values will inevitably lie between the land speculator on the one side and capital and labor on the other; and we challenge any citizen or organization having the welfare of the State at heart who is inclined to dispute our indictment or quarrel without remedy, to produce a better program."

It was decided during the second day of the conference to circulate the following petition in Texas for signatures to be presented to the thirty-fifth Legislature when it convenes:

"Two hundred and fifty thousand tenant farmers and the homeless and landless people in the cities and towns of Texas call for relief at your hands. Idle land and jobless men are a menace to our peace and well-being.

"The first necessary step to bring "The landless man and the manless land" together is to make it profitable to use land to its highest purpose and unprofitable to hold land out of use.

"To this end we demand that you submit to the people of Texas for their approval, this amendment to the constitution of the State:

"Article 8, Section 1, of the constitution of the State of Texas shall be amended so as hereafter to read as follows, to wit:

"Taxation shall be equal and uniform, as to property subject to taxation. Provided, however, that all forms of property, which shall have been created by the labor of human beings, shall forever be exempted from taxation, and that the State and all political divisions thereof, generally known as counties, cities and towns, shall assess for taxation only the rental of the unimproved value of land and the value of the franchise of public service corporations that use the streets or lands of the State or any political subdivisions of the same, and shall be empowered to fix such rate as to produce the revenue necessary to defray the expense

of the government, economically administered, in said State or political subdivision of same."

The conference adjourned subject to call of the chairman.—R. BEDICHEK.

SINGLE TAX PARTY DINNER AT PHILADELPHIA

The Single Tax Party of Penn. held its 1st Anniversary Banquet at the Continental Hotel on April 8th, and it proved to be the *biggest Single Tax event that ever happened* in Phila.

Two hundred or more men and women from New York, New Jersey, Delaware, and interior of Penn. gathered together and sat for 4 hours listening to real Single Tax speakers relate the merits of Single Tax, and the absolute necessity of *perserving Single Tax integrity* through the medium of separate party action.

Jas. A. Robinson called upon the Party's candidate for city solicitor, Wm. G. Wright, who spoke upon the need of Single Taxers acting as guides or saviours of a wayward humanity. Robt. G. Macauley, the editor of the Party's organ, *The Single Tax Herald*—spoke in a manner and style calculated to remove any doubts in the minds of the "almost persuaded" about what Single Tax means. Jerome C. Reis, the State Organizer of the Party, next spoke on the absolute need of organization (and an honor bound organization) to save the S. T. movement from complete disintegration. W. J. Wallace, of New Jersey candidate of the Land Value Tax Party for President in 1912, next spoke for party unity with an appealing force and convincing calmness which were irresistible. Next came Leo. W. Marks, the Party's candidate for Mayor, with an eloquent portrayal of the Party activities. A poem followed by Oliver McKnight, the Party's candidate for Sheriff, on "The Regenerated Single Taxer," dealing with the activities of the Single Taxer *before and after* the "Regeneration"—the formation of the Party on April 4th 1915. John W. Dix, candidate for Coroner, spoke about

the absentee Single Taxers, and gave reasons why so many Single Taxers were not at the Banquet and why so many of them were. Last, but by no means least on the list of speakers, came Paul M. Gottlieb—the little fire-eating, stentorian-voiced youthful pride of the Party, who spoke of the "Hyphenated Single Taxer," and showed how and why the odious term of "hyphenated" would cease to be a word in the political vocabulary.

The speeches were interspersed with selections of music rendered by the Rous-Osgood Trio. Other musical features were the rendering of a phonographic record "The Land Song," specially imported for the occasion. The collective singing of the same song, under the leadership of W. E. Smith, and a vocal selection by Miss Belir—a musical celebrity of note.

Considering the Banquet from all sides; from the character of the speeches and the applause, from the enthusiasm aroused and efficient action inspired, and from all the other features and incidents, we feel that it was a great event, and we hope that those who have opposed separate party action in the past, will take the "lesson to their hearts," and at least make inquiry into the merits of our claims.—OLIVER MCKNIGHT.

THE ONTARIO COMMISSION ON UNEMPLOYMENT

The Ontario Commission on unemployment has rendered its report in a volume of over 300 pages. Like most reports of this kind it embodies suggestions and recommendations which are bewildering in their variety. The testimony is of the same general character, with the exception of that given by Single Taxers. On page 202 the testimony of the Rev. Andrew Brown is given. Among the contributory causes of unemployment this writer places first the system of taxation, and says: "I feel that by penalizing the building of homes or the building of factories by taxing them when they are built we thereby handicap to that extent the building of