

representation in the Parliament. On these grounds alone it should be supported by all reformers as it is a big improvement on the policy of the party that calls itself Liberal.

Our Henry George Social was held on Sept. 23d, and was a great success. The commemoration address was given by Dr. W. E. Macklin from China, and was a very fine, inspiring effort. Being a personal friend of Henry George, the Doctor was able to give some interesting narratives concerning the life and work of that great reformer. The account of the reform work in China was also very interesting. During his stay with us the Doctor pleased all with whom he came in contact, and we were all sorry that this enthusiastic Single Taxer could not prolong his stay with us.—E. J. CRAIGIE, Secretary, Adelaide, South Australia.

WONDERFUL PROGRESS IN WESTERN CANADA—DEATH OF W. J. TREGILLUS.

Your readers will no doubt have noticed reports of the new land value tax measure lately passed by the legislature of Alberta. The November number of the *Single Taxer*, published by our League, gave extended reference to this new law, which I regard as one of the most important yet adopted, as it recognizes the principle of land value tax for provincial revenue purposes. Heretofore the so called Single Tax movement in our Western provinces has been mainly along municipal lines. This, of course, is the line of least resistance. We are now working in the provincial field, and hope that will be followed by a move for a federal tax. Naturally, in a new country like this, with vast areas of vacant land held by railway and other corporations as well as private speculators, the first movement in land value taxation is to tackle the vacant land proposition. As the farmers who use the land are obliged to pay a tax (customs or manufacturer's privilege) upon almost everything they require in the operation of their farms, and as these same farmers

through the use of the land, add largely to the value of the vacant land around them it seems legitimate that the thin end of the wedge of land value taxation for provincial purposes should enter in this quarter. This again is the line of least resistance, in the larger provincial field. As for the federal field, we think that it will have to be a fight for free trade for some time yet, before we can hope to make progress toward a land value tax.

Alberta now has land value taxation almost exclusively for municipal revenue purposes, and a wild land value tax and an increment tax for provincial purposes. A very fair start for a community that only secured provincial government a few years ago. Saskatchewan province also has a vacant land tax, but it is a flat rate per quarter section and not based on value.

What is particularly significant about the so called Single Tax movement in our Western provinces is the fact that with the exception of British Columbia, it is primarily a farmer's movement. At almost every meeting of farmers held in the three prairie provinces of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta, resolutions demanding measures of land value taxation have been adopted. Some of these have been straight Single Tax resolutions, such as one passed by the Alberta provincial association in annual meeting, which called for the abolition of all customs and other forms of taxation, and the raising of all revenues by a Single Tax on land values.

Time was when the farmers of these provinces were continually calling for various little measures of assistance, charity or patronage. They wanted the government to do all kinds of things for them, and this gave rise to the saying in political circles in the East that the people of the West wanted to be fed with a spoon. Things are different now. The cry of the western farmer now is: "A square deal and no favors." They have got beyond the idea of demanding little patronage measures. They have declared in convention that they want no protective measures or other considerations. They demand only relief from the burdens imposed upon them by legislation in

the interests of others.³⁰ It is a fact that the basic industry of agriculture in Canada has been tremendously burdened as a result of the privileges and monopolies established by law. The profits of the farmer have been reduced to the vanishing point, and this has been reflected by an actual decrease in the rural population in many of the older settled districts. Even in the new provinces the towns and cities have grown out of all proportion to the agricultural development. But a crisis is now on, and the grinding process of readjustment is being severely felt. The cry is "Back to the land." Every newspaper and public speaker is harping on this chord these days, and all sorts of schemes are proposed to settle the unemployed of the overcrowded cities upon the land. Few of those who discuss these proposals recognize that agriculture has been rendered unprofitable by land monopoly and other forms of privilege. Only last week a large deputation from the Canadian Manufacturers Association arrived in Winnipeg for the purpose of meeting the executive of the organized farmers of the West. They had a little scheme up their sleeve which they wished the farmers to endorse, to the effect that the federal government should vote \$50,000,000 for the purpose of settling unemployed persons in the cities upon the land. The manufacturers of course met their Waterloo. Practically every man on the executive of the organized farmers of Canada is a Single Taxer, and instead of accepting the plan which the manufacturers had been working on, they explained the real difficulties in the way and pointed out how useless it would be to tax themselves to settle others upon land under existing conditions.

The wonderful development of progressive thought among our farmers is due to the splendid organization which has existed among them for some years. A provincial organization exists in each of the provinces, with locals throughout the rural districts. An annual convention is held in each province, attended by delegates from each local, at which the provincial executive is elected and the general policy of the association is

discussed. The provincial executives also meet in convention under the name of the Canadian Council of Agriculture. Thus co-operative action is secured between the various provinces. The farmers' movement in western Canada has not been a flash-in-the-pan movement such as has characterized many of the rural movements of the past. It has been a steady growth, and from its inception broad-minded, progressive men have been at the helm. A vigorous educational campaign has been kept up, by the circulation of literature, sending speakers to address the locals and in other ways. Along this line is the publication of a weekly paper of a high class and broadly democratic. This paper, the *Grain Growers Guide*, is now one of the great institutions of the movement. The Single Tax has always had a prominent place in the educational program. The result is, that a wonderful transformation has taken place in the predominating thought in our rural population. Today the grain growers' associations of these western provinces form the greatest power for democracy in the land. The influence of this work in the West has spread to the East and appears to be working there in a renewed movement among the farmers of the older provinces.

The activities of the organized farmers have extended to co-operative efforts, which have been almost universally successful. The Grain Growers' Grain Co. is the most extensive of these. This is said to be the greatest co-operative enterprise on the continent. It handles the products of the farm on the road to market and acts as a purchasing agent for farm supplies. Through this agency about 30,000,000 bushels of wheat are handled annually, besides enormous quantities of other products and supplies for the farm. The Saskatchewan Elevator Co. is a later enterprise of a co-operative nature. The annual meetings of these two concerns were held this month and large profits were shown in each case on the year's operations. The Public Press, in connection with which an extensive printing and publishing business is carried on in Winnipeg, is another activity of the allied farmers. This business was carried on at a loss for a considerable time, but has now

been placed on a paying basis. As the educative work of the movement been conducted largely through this branch, the financial deficits of the past cannot be considered as losses.

Some knowledge of the work of the organized farmers is necessary to understand the development of Single Tax sentiment and the institution of tax reform measures in these provinces. Land value taxation has now reached a stage of progress where it is showing results. The people are realizing the beneficent influence of the work already accomplished. Those who know nothing about the Single Tax as a philosophy, realize the actual advantage resulting from the partial measures which have been put in operation. The feeling is therefore almost universally favorable and the demand for further progress along the same lines is steadily growing. It is not an exaggeration to say that a widespread sentiment in favor of the Single Tax permeates popular opinion throughout the entire western country.

I regret to state that the sudden demise of Mr. W. J. Tregillus took place at Calgary on Nov. 12. Mr. Tregillus was one of our prominent workers. He was one of the few men of wealth who take up with the cause of democracy. Mr. Tregillus was an active worker in the movement of the organized farmers and at the time of his death was president of the Alberta organization. He had large business as well as agricultural interests in his province.—D. W. BUCHANAN, Winnipeg, Manitoba.

LETTERS THAT WERE NOT ANSWERED.

(The following admirable letters written by Antonio Bastida, the one to Joshua Wanhope, the second to the editor of the *Call*, failed to elicit a reply:)

"Appreciating fully your zealous work in the interests of the laboring classes, I would endeavor to make that work still more efficient. Beginning then with the statement that I am an ardent Single Taxer, I beg you not to be prejudiced thereby, but to calmly consider what I have to say, and

whether or not the same can be made helpful in your work.

Vide, your article on rent: As there are many brainy men among Socialists, it stands to reason that their failure to understand the law of rent must be ascribed to the acceptance by them of a creed or premise which ignores or fails to gibe with that law. Now I might ask you to look up Ricardo and Mill on rent, but, as they fail to apply their law to suburban and urban lands, I will simply state that rent is payment for the privilege of exclusive possession of land, which has some advantage over other lands, irrespective of whether that advantage arises from fertility, location or any other cause. This law will continue under Socialism.

Example:

Mentally construct a perfect Socialist city, every house cast in identical mould. Granted that all locations are good, nevertheless there must be better and a best location. As all your citizens have equal rights to the best, it follows that those enjoying superior locations must suffer an equalizing "handicap," and that handicap, whether it be paid in time checks, or any other socialistic device, will be rent.

Take two groups of farmers in the Socialist commonwealth, one group produces 100 units of produce to the acre, the other 50. The produce is turned into the storehouse, the distribution is 75, or equal to all the farmers. Well? Does not your society take from the workers a part of their product on the superior fields, in order to recompense the workers on the less fields, who have an equal right to work on the more fertile ones?

Kindly test this reasoning fully, but be sure not to include payment for the use of a house in it, for that is payment on capital and is not rent. Of course I understand that our definitions differ slightly, and I am arguing only that payment for the exclusive right, or rather privilege, of using or occupying land with superior qualities or benefits must continue under the socialistic regime.

Assuring you that I shall be glad to see the Socialists steal the Single Taxer's thun-