

good attendance of members and associates, who listened with appreciation to the lecturer's able presentation of his case. A number of pertinent questions were asked and answered, and short speeches were made by those who had convictions on the various points raised. In another column we publish a letter on the subject by Mr. William Cassels. Mr. Madsen or others may have something to say either in reply or by raising some new view.

A vote of thanks to Mr. Madsen closed the proceedings.

IMPRESSIONS OF THE CONFERENCE

An Edinburgh correspondent writes:—

A movement that can summon such a representative and sympathetic gathering as that held in Glasgow under our auspices on 4th November has proved it is no longer in the mere propaganda stage. No doubt there is still much need for education before we can get enough power in Parliament to remove all the abuses of landlordism and make the people the undisputed owners of all the wealth they produce. But propaganda must be backed up repeatedly and energetically by the organisation of the public sentiment we have succeeded in recruiting in our favour. That, I take it, is the chief function of a public conference. It shows where we stand in politics; it shows where are the forces that are ready to assist in carrying our reform, and what is their strength; if it is a success, it is at once a demonstration to outsiders that our propaganda has not been in vain, and a powerful incentive to ourselves to educate and to organise with redoubled vigour.

Before the meeting took place, one had heard the Glasgow Conference spoken of as an "experiment." The assumption was that the mind of the nation was too much distracted by the circumstances of the war to listen to any proposals touching domestic reforms of any kind. Glasgow has proved that that idea must be set aside as far as we are concerned. The enthusiasm of the audience and the response given to the statement of our case have made us recognise the fact that, in the midst of the greatest catastrophe that could have afflicted the community, a very large section of the people are looking to this movement to urge its policy without hesitation and without any false fear that we are out to obstruct the advice to "look after the war and after-the-war will take care of itself." The problems associated with the cost of the war, its effect on labour and industry as the costs are piled up, its possible results in exaggerating tremendously the tribute poverty must pay to wealth, and the pre-war demand now more than ever imperative for a sane and swift solution of the land question, are not to be forgotten, even while the war calls for the most supreme military effort and distributes its frightful reminders in both public and private life. Such is the lesson and the experience we have gained, and it should make us the more confident in advocating our reform with no less insistence now than at any time. We have been encouraged to go on, knowing the important part we must play in the coming reconstruction and in establishing the conditions that, through a just distribution of wealth, can alone make future wars impossible.

The holding of the Glasgow Conference has been more than justified. Its success, I was assured, surpassed all the expectations of its promoters, and for that we who came from a distance are all the more grateful to the Scottish League and its devoted Secretary, James Busby. A great meeting, filled to overflowing and with many scarcely able to find even standing room, had come to discuss, and on persuasion to vote for, our resolutions—to forward them to the Government and to Scottish Members of Parliament as a decision and an instruction. The majority had not been whipped up as reliable supporters, but were strangers sent as delegates from local rating bodies, trades unions, co-operative societies, labour associations, I.L.P.

branches, &c., to hear what we had to say, and to report. Seldom have I heard speeches carrying greater conviction than the addresses delivered on this occasion from the platform. Mr. Dundas White, Mr. Raffan, Mr. Outhwaite, and the other speakers took magnificent advantage of this exceptional opportunity, this experiment of a Land Values Conference in war time, and fully deserved the great reception they were accorded. The resolutions were passed with acclamation, and there will be no mistake about the message the numerous delegates will take back to those whom they represented.

We may have to submit to the difficulties of conducting public propaganda at present by the holding of outdoor and indoor meetings, the distribution of literature, and all the other familiar means of reaching the elector; but that is no reason for idleness. Another fertile channel is open to us and it demands our unabated activity, namely, to organise, in all centres where propaganda has been conducted, the public sentiment in our favour. I was happy to learn at the business meetings held in connection with the Conference that steps were contemplated in that direction. I hope the Committee in London may see its way to promote similar demonstrations all over the country, and, as one stationed in Edinburgh, I am certain that such a meeting here would give results that could not be bettered anywhere. Here as, elsewhere, the latent forces only require a lead, if the known radical nature of the community and the appalling house famine, the discussion of which with the increased cost of living gets as much prominence in our Press as the war itself, are any criterion of our desire to express ourselves as Glasgow has done.

The Conference held in Glasgow was a great success first as to numbers, which is always an important thing, but more particularly in spirit, a much more important thing.

A great audience of conflicting elements politically was held together through the power of a great idea, and through the skill and sincerity of those who expressed that great idea, gave it thought eloquent and logical embodiment. It was mainly a trades-union and labour audience, ready to quarrel on the slightest provocation, but at the same time an audience of honest-minded, sincere men, somewhat dogmatic, perhaps, as is generally the case with those who possess ideas, an audience of men who at the same time felt and deplored the wrongs in existing society. It was a critical audience of somewhat flammable material captured by the straightforward logic of the Chairman and by the convincing eloquence of Mr. Raffan, the determined spirit of Mr. Outhwaite, and the humour and fire of Mr. Frank Smith.

It was, in a word, an audience which had come to scoff, but remained to pray.

It became distinctly more of a public meeting than a conference, because in the face of the war calamity, individuals did not incline to the details, and, it may be, hair-splitting that might have been induced in happier times. It was an audience that said Godspeed to the work whose fruition will end this and all similar calamities.

Let those in authority beware; let them not think that democracy is dead. Meetings like this indicate patience, suffering patience, but the possibility of determinate action. The slumbering giant may awake and bring the whole edifice of horror and wrong about the ears of those who gain by it.

WILLIAM CASSELS.

I was glad to be at the Conference at Glasgow on the 4th. I got safely back to London on Monday afternoon, and, as I know you need all the encouragement you can get to help you in this great work of yours, I want to tell you what my impression of the meeting was.

I frankly confess I was greatly and pleasurably surprised at the unanimity of feeling in favour of the taxation of