

The modified form of Single Tax was adopted by Fort Erie several years ago. The first year, improvements were exempted from taxation to the extent of 20 per cent. the second year 40 per cent., and last year the exemption was 60 per cent. This year the exemption will be 80 per cent. It remains at that figure unless the system is discarded.

Under this system, the village must derive its revenue from taxing assessments totaling about \$580,000, although the total assessment, including buildings and other improvements is \$1,350,000.

Fort Erie's bonded debt has increased nearly \$300,000 in the last two years. The most of this was for a sewer system, but \$50,000 went for schools and \$25,000 for improvements to the waterworks.—Buffalo, N. Y., *Express*.

“THE amount of rent is determined by the capacity of the community to buy, not by the services rendered by the owners. It is a measure of monopoly. That a community which has improved its streets and educated its people should allow the possessors of its land to secure to themselves the financial counterparts of these benefits can have no justification either in reason or in morality, whilst from the point of view of economy it is waste.”—RIGHT HON. J. R. MACDONALD.

## Why Not Tax Breath?

THE *Tribune* of Rome reports that the authorities of Villefanca d' Asti have decided to raise their public revenue by levying a tax of so much per head in order to balance their budget. The tax is to vary according to weight of the tax payer. The lowest tax of 40 cents has been fixed for children who weigh 21 pounds or less, and the highest tax is 88 cents for people weighing 84 pounds. What a market is here created for “anti-fat remedies.”

## High Rents At Jerusalem

THERE is probably no place in the world where there are greater differences of opinion than in the modern city of Jerusalem.

But all sorts and conditions of men there, of varying creeds and nationalities, are agreed on one thing—that rents are too high and must be diminished. This was the consensus of opinion at what was the most harmonious mass meeting ever held within the walls. Bitterness at the extortion of landlords was the fellow feeling which made the various groups feel that they were kin.

So unless the landlords take the hint the local Chamber of Commerce will resign and all shops will be closed on Wednesday.

Harlem, Washington Heights, the Bronx and Astoria, which have had housing troubles of their own, will watch the developments with great interest—N. Y. *Evening Telegram*.

## The Study of Political Economy

(Extracts from a lecture by Henry George before the students of the University of California, March 9, 1877)

THE science which investigates the laws of the production and distribution of wealth concerns itself with matters which among us occupy more than nine-tenths of human effort, and perhaps more than nine-tenths of human thought. In its province are included all that relates to the wages of labor and the earnings of capital; all regulations of trade; all questions of currency and finance; all taxes and public disbursements;—in short, everything that can in any way affect the amount of wealth which a community can secure, or the proportion in which that wealth will be distributed between individuals.

The laws which it aims to discover are the laws by which states wax rich and populous; or grow weak and decay; the laws upon which depend the comfort, happiness, and opportunities of our individual lives. And as the development of the nobler part of human nature is powerfully modified by material conditions, if it does not absolutely depend upon them, the laws sought for by political economy are the laws which at last control the mental and moral as well as the physical states of humanity.

The very importance of the subjects with which political economy deals raises obstacles in its way. The discoveries of other sciences may challenge pernicious ideas, but the conclusions of political economy involve pecuniary interests, and thus thrill directly the sensitive pocket nerve. For, as no social adjustment can exist without interesting a larger or smaller class in its maintenance, political economy at every point is apt to come in contact with some interest or other which regards it as the silversmiths of Ephesus did those who taught the uselessness of presenting shrines to Diana.

Would you fain do something to relieve distress, to eradicate ignorance, to extirpate vice? You must turn to political economy to know their causes, that you may lay the axe to the root of the evil tree. Else all your efforts will be in vain. Philanthropy, unguided by an intelligent appreciation of causes, may palliate or it may intensify, but it cannot cure. If charity could eradicate want, if preaching could make men moral, if printing books and building schools could destroy ignorance, none of these things would be known today.

There is a comfortable belief prevalent among us that we have at last struck the trade-winds of time, and that by virtue of what we call progress all these evils will cure themselves. Do not accept this doctrine without examination. The history of the past does not countenance it, the signs of the present do not warrant it . . . where wealth most abounds, there poverty is deepest; where luxury is most profuse, the gauntest want jostles it. In cities which are the storehouses of nations, starvation annually claims its victims. Where the costliest churches