

Legislature has latterly provided that the prices shall be fixed by a comparatively cheap method of arbitration, the cheapness is still considered to be only comparative, and arbitrators have a way of adopting a market price which only obtains because the market has been systematically inflated.

## VICTORIA

*Progress*, Melbourne, February issue, reported: A new Rating Reform League has been formed at Box Hill, the aim of which is to secure the exemption of improvements from rating. Camberwell, which has adopted the principle of levying rates upon land values only, has, vide *The Age*, 12th January, "again led other municipalities in total number and value of permits issued for new buildings, etc., during December last. The number of permits issued in this municipality was 118, and value of the buildings £74,983. In Melbourne the value was £68,751."

Melbourne, unlike the cities of Brisbane, Sydney and Wellington (N.Z.), sadly lags behind the times in not yet having instituted this plan of raising municipal income.

Officers of this new League are: President, ex-Councillor Proudfoot; Vice-Presidents, Councillors Archer, George and Mahony, and Messrs Bassett, Taysom and Todd; Treasurer, Mr H. G. Brett; Secretary, Mr R. E. Powell. Ratepayers are to be asked to sign a petition requesting a poll at the next municipal elections.

## INDIA

From an article which appeared recently in the *Hindusthan Standard* of Calcutta. The author is Mr K. Srinivasan of Mysore, Madras, who writes us that he is making a close study of Henry George's writings which will be reviewed by him from time to time. He is hoping to arrange a broadcast talk on Henry George and aims to start economic classes under the auspices of the Henry George School of Social Science.

HENRY GEORGE, the centenary of whose birth falls next year, stands alone like the Arabian bird among the unorthodox economists of the generation to which Marshall belonged.

Dr John Dewey, New York's beloved philosopher, spoke true when he said: "It would require less than the fingers of the two hands to enumerate those who, from Plato down, rank with Henry George. . . . His clear intellectual insight into social conditions, his passionate feeling for the remediable ills from which humanity suffers, find their logical conclusion in his plans for liberating labour and capital from the shackles which now bind them."

Of his books, *Progress and Poverty* is easily the masterpiece; in its pages he analyses, with masterly skill, the rationale of the increase of wants with the increase of wealth and suggests a remedy for the piquancies of the modern economic system.

It is a fascinating survey of the numerous aspects of "the poverty which, in the midst of plenty, pinches and embrutes men"; it is a convincing discussion of the great fact that "the social difficulties existing wherever a certain stage of progress has been reached, do not arise from local circumstances, but are, in some way or another, engendered by progress itself"; it is the quintessence of a sane social philosophy based upon the fundamental law of the universe—justice. It is as gripping as a fairy tale and guaranteed to provide immeasurable intellectual stimulus. It was all very well for Marshall to say that not a single economic doctrine in Mr George's book is both new and true,

since what is new is not true and what is true is not new.

But his was a jaundiced vision; he had been schooled to play the part of Sir Oracle by his dutiful disciples who made a fetish of his principles. His ungenerous censure cannot minimize the value of *Progress and Poverty*. It has been translated into more languages and sold in more editions than any other economic work.

## TRANSVAAL

*The Free People*, Johannesburg, organ of the Farmers' and Workers' Party, reported in its March issue:

The first Conference of the Party was held at Craighall on 11th February. About forty representatives were present. Encouraging reports were given of progress on the Reef and in each of the four Provinces. There can be no doubt that a firm foundation is being laid for the Party's growth throughout the country.

It was decided that party members could be nominated for municipal, provincial and national elections; that candidates must be pledged to support the fundamental principle of the Party: "*The whole of the land for the whole of the people*," and its general objects as set forth in the programme, and that branches will nominate candidates for approval by the Central Executive Committee.

The Central Executive Committee, a Finance Committee, an Editorial Committee and a Propaganda and Organizing Committee were elected.

## DR JAMES DEVON

We regret to report the death of Dr James Devon which occurred on 25th February at his home, 67, Great King Street, Edinburgh. He was formerly one of His Majesty's Prison Commissioners for Scotland and had been in retirement. Radical in politics he was as outspoken as he was sincere, his social philosophy being that which he had many years ago derived from Henry George. To that movement he gave not only zeal and intelligence but a happy disposition with all his genial humour. A popular speaker, he was a great Burns enthusiast and had proposed "The Immortal Memory" at many gatherings throughout Scotland. He earned wide distinction as an authority on criminology. His book *The Criminal and the Community*, published in January, 1910, was a trenchant work on prison management, but far more so a text-book that came so well from this authority burning with indignation against the social conditions and the social injustice that make for poverty and unemployment and crime.

Mr William Reid, Secretary of the Henry George Freedom League (Glasgow) writes:

The League has lost by death an old member in the person of Dr James Devon who was for some time H.M. Commissioner of Prisons. He wrote a lot on the question of Crime and Criminals. Mr Rosslyn Mitchell, in a *Daily Record* article, says: "The death breaks the last link which joined the public life of Glasgow with the era of characters." He quotes Dr Devon as follows, viz.:—"What kind of judicial system is it that has the same kind of punishment for a man who half-murders a child and for a man who spits on a tramcar?" "Society will do everything for the bad boy that it ought to do for the good boy and doesn't." "You pamper your criminals and starve your decent poor." "Sixty days in prison is often the only chance a man has to pull himself together by regular hours, food and exercise." "Some of you fellows exploit every ism except humanism." "The man who lets a poisonous house is worse than a man who sells diseased meat—the poison lasts longer."

Never was a more human document written. To Mrs Devon and her daughters we extend sincere sympathy in their bereavement.