

In response to various invitations all over the Highlands, the League will endeavour to hold a series of meetings during the summer so far as funds permit.

MANCHESTER LEAGUE: Arthur H. Weller, Secretary, 5, Cross Street, Manchester.

Since last going to press meetings have been addressed as follows:—

- April 12th.—Queen's Park Parliament: J. F. Cunningham, "Why we are Poor."
 " 20th.—Queen's Park Parliament: D. J. J. Owen.
 " 21st.—Park Lane Women's Co-operative Guild: A. H. Weller, "Wages and Prices."
 May 6th.—Henry George Club meeting, Vegetarian Restaurant, 68, High Street, Manchester; 7.45. J. H. Ziegler, Jnr.
 " 10th.—Widnes Women's Co-operative Guild: A. H. Weller, "Wages and Prices."

The candidates put forward by the Stretford Labour Party in the recent Urban District Council elections, jointly issued an election address in which the following reference was made to finance:

"Heavy expenditure is being forced on the Local Councils by Government schemes, and the present system of levying rates is incapable of providing the money to meet this burden without imposing an intolerable strain on the ratepayers. A step towards the solution of this problem, the Labour Party suggests, lies in the Rating of Land Values. By the Rating of Land Values is meant the imposing of a rate upon the selling value of all land. Under the present system we impose rates upon houses, shops and factories, but allow the landowner to remain entirely free."

A localised "Tale of Two Cities" was also printed and distributed. This excellent propaganda is largely the result of the work and influence of Mr. Albert Brown, one of the candidates and a member of the League's executive. Although he and his colleagues were not successful at the poll, a sound foundation has been laid in the Stretford district for future success.

Commenting on the Manchester Corporation's housing schemes to provide 10,000 houses in this city, the **MANCHESTER EVENING NEWS** says: "It is officially stated that the rate of progress has recently improved, and—this is unofficial—the reversion of municipal property to be may now come to the second generation of the chosen tenants, instead of the third. Even this, however, supposes a great acceleration, as past progress means that present urgent needs will occupy some 120 years."

The Manchester League's "Press bureau" work is still being carried on. Articles and letters on current topics are supplied at intervals to newspapers in many towns in Lancashire and Cheshire, as well as to trade union and co-operative journals.

In the **MANCHESTER MUNICIPAL NOTES** for April the Municipal Progressive Union pays tribute to the work of the Land Values Leagues in the following words: "The Rating of Land Values has the advantage over the rival proposal of a Municipal Income Tax in that for many years now—practically since the publication of **PROGRESS AND POVERTY** (the sacred book of the movement) in 1879, there has been a band of devotees of Henry George who have preached the pure gospel of the Single Tax in season and out of season. It has almost become a religion with many of its adherents."

HULL

Major C. J. Vasey, the prospective Liberal candidate for East Hull, addressed a number of meetings in the constituency last month at which he dealt fully with the land question. The chief plank in Major Vasey's platform is the taxation of land values. His enthusiasm for that policy and his ability to state the case are bringing much support to his campaign.

SIR HARRY VERNEY AND LIBERAL POLICY

Colonel Sir Harry Verney, Bart., formerly Under-Secretary to the Board of Agriculture, was the principal speaker at a Liberal meeting held in Ellesmere Town Hall on 4th March. Referring to the land question, he said it was the community who made the land more valuable, but the landlord got the increased value. What they as Liberals said was that that part of the value which the community had created ought to go back to the community, and not to the landowner. They said that the rates ought to be based on the value of the land and not on the building, and one of the first things he hoped the Liberals would do when they got back to power was to alter the basis of the rateable value, and have the rates and taxes paid on the site value of the land.

The speaker next dealt with the guarantee given by the Government to the farmers in regard to wheat prices. "Let us consider what might happen," said Sir Harry, "though I don't say it will happen. Before the war wheat prices fluctuated between 29s. to over 100s. per quarter. Supposing wheat should fall to 30s. per quarter. The difference between the selling price and the guarantee might be anything from £1,000,000 to £20,000,000, and some say up to £30,000,000. Do you think people who live in towns—and seven-eighths of the population live in towns—are going to put their hands into their pockets to ladle out millions of pounds to put into the pockets of the farmers, who they think are doing well enough? I don't think the people will do it." Proceeding, the speaker said he did not think it was the right way to encourage agriculture by bolstering it up with doles. The Liberal policy for agriculture was to do away with all guarantees and controls and sending officials round to tell farmers what to do, and let agriculture stand on its own feet. The farm labourer must have a wage sufficient to keep a wife and three children in comfort, to pay an economic rent for his house, and to be provided with a large garden or an allotment. The first thing he would do for the farmer was to relieve his rates; an undue proportion of rates fell on the improvements a farmer made.

[Sir Harry Verney was Chairman of the Liberal Land Sub-Committee, and was associated with Mr. Charles S. Smithson and others in drafting the resolutions on the Taxation and Rating of Land Values adopted by the Conference of the National Liberal General Committee at Nottingham on 24th and 25th February.—Editor **LAND & LIBERTY**.]

JOSEPH FELS—HIS LIFE WORK

By Mary Fels

It was clear to him that agriculture, in countries where the common people prosper, is not merely one occupation amongst many others, but the great alternative to all industry. Let the conditions for its practice be advantageous as compared with the trades, let the land demand workers and pay them adequately for their work; the consequence would be seen immediately in the withdrawal of the labour surplus in the industrial market. And that desirable state of affairs would be reached in which employers would compete for labourers, instead of labourers competing for the privilege of obtaining a job at rates that barely keep them and their families from the verge of starvation. Moreover, he saw that the taxation of land values would relieve the working population of that unfair incidence of rates and taxes which under the existing system they have to bear.—*From Chap. VIII.*

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