

Social Science, notices having been sent to about 1,050 people. The place of first meeting is the Royal York Hotel, Toronto, beginning 28th January, and continuing weekly every Tuesday for ten weeks, Mr Owen acting as leader. Another important piece of work is the sending, with suitable circular letter, of Mr Lester's *Poverty and Plenty* to every member of the Alberta legislature.

"A weekly lunch meeting of members is held at the Dutch Inn, Toronto. This has been fixed for each Thursday but is subject to change to suit the convenience of the majority. The members of the Executive are being kept in touch with one another on the work of the Association and any future plans or engagements by the service of a Bulletin sent to them every week or so.

"Volunteers assisted well in the 'Addressing Bee' which made it possible to post out promptly the invitations to the Royal York Meeting."

In a letter to the *Western Producer* of Saskatoon, Mr S. G. Pratt of Bracken, Sask., has cordially commended Mr Lester's *Poverty and Plenty* and informed readers where to get this "splendid introduction to an understanding of the true national dividend." The notice has induced at least one reader of that paper to apply for the pamphlet and send Canadian money for it, made up of 25 cents in paper and 10 cents in coin.

NEW ZEALAND

Mr H. J. Egan, of Christchurch, in a letter to Mr Fredk. Verinder, after conveying to him a warm compliment on his new book *Land & Freedom*, writes:—

"As you are probably aware we have recently had a change of government in this country in consequence of the overwhelming Labour victory at the polls in November last. Unfortunately the Labour policy promises to be no better than that of their reactionary predecessors. Labour has based its programme upon a scheme of guaranteed prices involving currency manipulation and wage fixation. In the last analysis this resolves itself into the initiation of a rigid control of supply and demand, a fact which a Labour candidate admitted in reply to my question. In fine it means a relapse into mercantilism; the institution of a rigid social stratification wherein the individual's social status and economic function will be determined not by his own capability and character but by the exigencies of State control.

"Further evidence of the reactionary nature of Labour's programme is furnished by its declared determination to 'insulate N.Z. against economic shocks' by means of tariffs. Overseas trade is to be regulated by bilateral trade treaties and every endeavour is to be made to protect local industries.

"Labour, of course, is under the delusion that the return of prosperity is contingent upon a rise in prices. The reverse is the case, as in N.Z. at present the problem may be summarized under three headings, viz., the disparity of price levels resulting in the failure of the cost of production to equate itself to the value of production—this is largely the result of a high protective tariff; inflated land and capital values, the consequence of monopolies; note: a cost of living commission some years ago elicited the fact that almost every article of commerce in N.Z. is controlled by a monopoly and the position is worse to-day since vested interests have had the active support of the State (price fixation, etc.); and finally an unjust and unsound fiscal system which last year absorbed 25 per cent of the national income. As far as the manufacturers are concerned they are under the added disability of lack of population. Hence their overhead is out of all proportion to the value of their products and they are unable to meet foreign competition. It thus emerges that the 'Single Tax' provides a complete solution to the economic problem here.

"New Zealand is a beautiful country; its majestic mountains; its placid fiords, its semi-tropical forests and its numerous rivers all combine to give it a natural environment of infinite charm; and its natural beauty is equalled by the fertility of its soil, by its genial climate, by the latent resources of minerals, and by the potential power which exists in its turbulent waterways. Manifestly, this

is a country intended by the Creator to be the home of a happy, healthy and virile people. Unfortunately, however, the blight of landlordism is apparent on all sides; the abundant opportunities are unrealized and labour is reduced to a helpless impotence. It is only necessary to travel from one end of this country to the other to realize that land monopoly is more devastating than war. On all sides may be seen the forest is devoured to a wilderness of rotting logs and second growth, i.e., fern and scrub; thousands of acres have been turned from fertility to barrenness by exploiters whose greed had no care for the future; and in our cities all the elements of social deterioration may be seen in the army of unemployed, in the growing slum areas, and in the relief depots which are pauperizing a multitude of people. And this in a land where every stimulus exists to the exercise of initiative and enterprise. Verily, the landlord and his ally, the place-seeking politician, who deliberately ignores the natural tendency to evolve an economic system which will produce a maximum of wealth with a minimum of effort and distributive system allowing of a maximum of enjoyment of produced wealth, are the greatest enemies of mankind.

"Out here, largely owing to the work of Mr P. J. O'Regan, the late Sir Geo. Fowlds and other enthusiasts, we have at least a commencement of Henry George's policy in the shape of unimproved rating. As the adoption of the system is optional it is as yet not universal and in any case the rate levy is so small as to almost leave the landlords' privilege intact. It is noteworthy however, that the localities which have adopted the system are in general the most progressive while the active hostility of the landed interest to unimproved rating attests to the efficacy of the Single Tax."

SPAIN

At a meeting of the Seville branch of the Republican Union Party held on 29th December a land and tax reform programme was unanimously approved, proposing "the substitution of all existing taxes by a single tax on the selling value of land apart from improvements and the socialization of all sources of wealth which are naturally monopolies."

Prior to the election the collection of the land-value rate in Barcelona was suspended. The Union of Landed Proprietors says: "If the left are successful at the election the rate will be re-established; on the other hand the right, in agreement with the proprietors, would suppress it." As one of the first declarations of the new Prime Minister, Señor Azana, was that full freedom of election would be restored to local authorities, we may hope that the steady progress of Spain in land-value rating will be resumed.

The January issue of *La Reforma Social*, in addition to much other valuable matter, carried a 24-page supplement, reprinting Henry George's *Crime of Poverty*. The February issue had a 16-page supplement, a new pamphlet by Señor Argente dealing with government intervention in business.

GERMANY

The German Land Reform Union has addressed a memorial to the Reich Finance Minister urging a reform of the land tax so as to convert it into a tax on the value of land apart from the buildings and improvements erected on the land. The memorial points out that this is important not merely as a financial measure but above all because of its effect in providing employment and improving the housing conditions of the people. "The tax on pure land value is specially important for the region between town and country where new dwellings are required. Again and again we find that just where smallholdings should be established or houses should be built the price of land rises. . . . The tax proposed by us will not only bring substantial returns to the Treasury, but will also undermine price-raising speculation in land and so prevent the unearned rent of land from being capitalized and flowing into the pockets of individuals."

For further explanation of the meaning and purpose of land-value taxation the memorial refers to an article by the late Dr Adolf Damaschke which appeared in the last issue