

NEW ZEALAND.

The anniversary of the birth of Henry George was celebrated by the executive committee of the Auckland branch of the Land Values League at the annual dinner, held in the Strand Café, Auckland, on September 3. There was a large attendance of members and prominent business men and friends. The Hon. George Fowlds presided.

In the course of his address Mr. Fowlds said: By the doctrine of single tax Henry George had supplied a perfect system that would make possible something approaching to social justice, combined with liberty. He had given the key to open the door to economic science, which in its simple form, if carried out, would do much for the welfare of mankind. By the adoption of a tax on land values and the gradual abolition of other forms of taxation the masses would be greatly benefited. It was only fair and reasonable, because each would pay according to benefits received, and because all beneficial activities of the States were expressed in the land value. The suggestion that any man should pay tax according to ability, was simply brigandage. The meanest intellect giving the slightest attention to the subject would realise that the building of railways, roads, and bridges, the provision of postal and telegraph services, supplying schools and teachers, all tended to increase land values.

The present unimproved value of the land of New Zealand amounted to 250 millions pounds, quite apart from any value added by the expenditure of capital and labour. For the five years prior to 1914 unimproved land values had increased to the extent of £52,000,000, and about half of that sum had gone into the hands of the payers of graduated land tax, who were only a small proportion of the community—about 6,000 in all. All progress and inventions increased land value. In the Henry George doctrine were the principles of social and moral reform that could be easily and peacefully applied, otherwise the time would come when we would have an upheaval like that in Russia, where the peasants sought the land. After this war the people who would have to pay the debts would not stand by pre-war conditions, but would insist on a community-produced product being collected for community purposes. He had taken a great deal of interest in public work and suffered somewhat thereby, but there was no part of his public work which gave him more satisfaction than his work in the Henry George movement. By supporting it he considered he was rendering the best service to his fellow-man. (Loud applause.)

Mr. P. J. O'Regan, Wellington, vice-president of the New Zealand Society for Taxation on Land Values, said he had been a disciple of Henry George for twenty-eight years, and was satisfied that the doctrine would endure and flourish, as it was an everlasting truth confirmed by human history.

Later in the evening a suggestion was made that the movement might be considerably benefited by the more frequent use of the term "site values." Mr. Fowlds replied by stating that if the single tax was called "heavenly bliss" there would still be the antagonism from vested interests just the same.

In an interview appearing in the *New Zealand Herald*, July 16, Mr. T. Bloodworth, president of the New Zealand Federation of Labour, stated that the Congress of Trades Unions held at Wellington demanded "the institution of a system of finance based on the taking of all community-created land values, as well as all incomes above £300 a year during the war period."

The *Railway Union Gazette* (Melbourne), May 20, reproduced the leaflet, "Shall there be Unemployment After the War?" issued by the United Committee.

THE ARGENTINE REPUBLIC.

No. 18 of *Tierra Libre* ("Free Land") reaches us from Cordoba. With that number, the journal, founded by the distinguished Single Taxer, Dr. I. E. Ferrer, became the official organ of the Cordoban "Georgeist Society." Dr. Ferrer is one of the Secretaries of the Editorial Committee. A Spanish translation of Henry George's "Condition of Labour" is being published as a *feuilleton*.

The Argentine League is running Senior Enrique F. Didiego as a candidate in the Municipal Election (Buenos Aires). A new League has been founded in Rosario.—F. V.

BRAZIL.

O Correio Paulistano (published in Sao Paulo) gives the first place in its issue of August 1st last to an article by Doctor Luiz Silveira (evidently one of a series) on the application of the Single Tax to the capital city of the province of S. Paulo. This is welcome evidence of the spread of "Georgeist" ideas in Brazil. Dr. Silveira recently addressed the Historical Institute of S. Paulo on the Single Tax, and his speech is reported in full in *El Impuesto Unico* ("The Single Tax") of Buenos Aires (July).—F. V.

ROBERT MORRIS ON THE LAND QUESTION

Robert Morris was one of the founders of the American revolution. The following extract from a letter of his dated July 29, 1783, is quoted by Mr. Samuel Milliken in the *Single Tax Review*: "And first as to land tax. The advantages of it are that it can be reduced to a certainty as to the amount and time. That no extraordinary means are necessary to ascertain it, and that land, being the ultimate object of human avarice, and that species of permanent property which peculiarly belongs to a country as neither to be removed or concealed, it stands foremost for the object of taxation, and ought most particularly to be burdened with those debts which have been incurred by defending the freedom of its inhabitants. But besides these general reasons there are some which are in a manner peculiar to this country. The land of America may, as to its proprietors, be divided into two kinds; that which belongs to the great landholders, and that which is owned and occupied by the industrious cultivators. This latter class of citizens is, generally speaking, the most numerous and most valuable part of a community. . . . A land tax will, probably, at the first mention, startle this order of men, but it can only be from the want of reflection, or the delusion must be kept up by the artifice of others. To him who cultivates from one to five hundred acres, a dollar a hundred is a trifling object, but to him who owns a hundred thousand, it is important. Yet a large proportion of America is the property of great landholders; they monopolise it without cultivation; they are for the most part, at no expense, either of money or of personal service, to defend it, and, keeping the price higher by monopoly than otherwise it would be, they impede the settlement and culture of the country. A land tax, therefore, would have the salutary operation of an agrarian law without the iniquity. . . . It would have the further advantage of encouraging settlements and population; this would redound not only to the national good, but even to the particular good of the landholders themselves."—(Sparks' "Diplomatic Correspondence of the American Revolution," XII., p. 227).