

passed two weeks ago by the Board of Estimate, are already manifest in the number of plans being prepared for multi-family dwellings to be erected in Greater New York during the coming spring and summer. For the first time since the outbreak of the World War in 1914 every borough of this city will, during the current year, become the scene of activity for apartment house builders who are actively planning to resume operations on a large scale because of the favourable combination offered through the exemption from local taxation for ten years plus a decidedly favourable market for building materials and labour.

"As a considerable proportion of the proposed new apartment house construction is scheduled for erection in neighbourhoods where there is already a large number of multi-family dwellings, the owners of the older structures, who have in many instances taken advantage of their tenants as the steadily increasing scales of rentals will show, may have to drastically revise their rentals for next year or experience some costly vacancies. The new structures will be erected under greatly reduced construction costs and will have the further advantage of being tax exempt for the greater part of their assessed valuation, and the owners of the new apartments will be able to rent suites at prices much below the average now being obtained in the older structures and at the same time get an excellent return on their investments.

"John W. Moore, Superintendent of the Queens Bureau of Buildings, stated this week that his borough is already receiving marked benefits from a revival of building activity. 'Up to March 5th,' Mr. Moore said, 'there were filed, since the tax exemption ordinance was passed, a total of 114 applications for dwellings, representing a total estimated cost of \$747,005. This is nearly one-third of the total estimated cost of all applications filed in the Queens Building Bureau during the month of February.'

"Although even the most optimistic cannot anticipate a complete solution of the local housing problem for some years to come, as this city is declared by experts in social economy to be at least five years under-built, the response to date to the tax exemption measure has been sufficient to warrant the prediction of very much less actual suffering because of the lack of available living accommodations. By next autumn the situation will be much easier and after that, experts agree, the final solution of New York's housing problem will be only a matter of money, men and materials."

### PRESS CORRESPONDENCE

During the past two months numerous press clippings have reached our offices, showing sustained propaganda in the newspapers by letters to the editor and special articles. Mr. F. Skirrow of Keighley takes a foremost place in this fine spade work. His contributions on Land Monopoly and Unemployment, Overcrowding, Anomalies of our Rating System, Free Trade and Free Production, Indirect Taxation, the Spirit of Liberty, etc., have appeared almost daily in one or other of such papers as the YORKSHIRE OBSERVER, the WEST YORKS. PIONEER, the BRADFORD TELEGRAPH, the NORTHERN DAILY TELEGRAPH and the LEEDS CITIZEN. The correspondence naturally provokes further letters in reply to objections, and Mr. Skirrow in this press campaign has been supported by Mr. J. K. Musgrave and others. Mr. A. H. Weller had a special article on "Wages and Prices" in the MANCHESTER CITY NEWS of 9th April, and has joined with Mr. D. J. J. Owen in sundry letters to the MANCHESTER GUARDIAN. Mr. James Busby wrote to the GLASGOW EVENING TIMES of 22nd March on "Unemployment."

All this press work is invaluable, and we hope others will join in it. If letters are published, we should be glad to have clippings so as to record from time to time how much is being done in this field.

### "WE HAVE MADE MISTAKES"—LENIN (From the DAILY HERALD, 11th March.)

Speaking at the Tenth All-Russian Congress of the Bolshevik Party, which opened at Moscow on 8th March, Lenin frankly admitted that mistakes had been made. "We made a mistake," he said, "in the distribution of stocks of foodstuffs, although these stocks were considerably larger than in former years. The fuel crisis is due to the fact that we attempted to restore our industrial life in too large a scale. Agriculture is passing through a crisis, not only as the result of the imperialist and civil wars, but because the new State apparatus is only gradually working out its methods, and therefore makes errors from time to time."

"The most important question of the present moment is the relation between the working classes and the predominating section of the Russian population—the peasants.

"The peasants consider that they have nothing more to fear from the Tsarist generals, and that they receive too small an amount of industrial products. They therefore consider that the sacrifices demanded from them by the State are too great. We must meet the desires of the peasants.

"We are introducing a food tax in kind, which will be imposed according to the means of the peasant, and will afford him a free field of action in his interests as a land-owner. This tax will consume only part of the peasants' harvest. The surplus that remains in his hands he will have the possibility of selling locally."

### THE FRENCH AND RUSSIAN REVOLUTIONS—A PARALLEL

*From a letter by MERVYN J. STEWART, appearing in the "Cornish Echo," 18th February.*

From 1750 a group of great French thinkers worked out a land and taxation policy which they called the single tax "l'impôt unique." Claiming that the land in its broadest sense was the only source of wealth and that taxation levied upon exchange, accumulation, or development would cost the country more than it returned to the Treasury, they claimed the whole site value of the land for the Crown, as chief of the State, in lieu of all other public and private taxes; and as reversion to the principles of the feudal tenures under which all land was held of the King, the owner. This principle was assailed by Voltaire, but said by the great Mirabeau to be only comparable in its importance to the invention of writing, or the substitution of money for barter. Adam Smith was well aware of this teaching of the "Physiocrats," but as the house-servant ("tutor") of a Duke, he glided carefully over thin ice in his pretentious text books; but the same great truths had been taught in England by Latimer the Reformer; Winstanley, the founder of the Society of Friends; and Locke, the first English philosopher, to whose efforts we have a mutilated and corrupted memorial in our "land tax" assessment notices, dating from the reign of William III.

The Physiocrats did not discuss urban land values with the same acuteness as rural (Moses had the same fault), and never were able to rouse the urban workers as they did the intellectual classes. The privileged nobility kept the King from accepting the new teaching as long as possible, and when at last he called in the Physiocrat leader, Turgot, it was too late except for the landlords to turn against the King himself with a seductive programme of a peasant proprietary, to which illusion France is still a victim.

So it was in Russia. The Russian reformers of the last fifty years have stood to their watchword "Zemla u volya," "Land and Liberty," as we say. Tolstoy, their great and noble leader, never failed to acknowledge his debt to Henry George, the American economist, whose philosophy, as he