

of their service by taxing the houses as they are put up. The real estate men are in favor of taxing into the public treasury the community-created land values because this makes land sites cheap, thus making the selling price of homes less and that much easier to sell. Furthermore, the family is encouraged to own its own home since the taxation of land values makes it unnecessary to tax houses, radios and baby buggies.

The director and vice-president of the largest corporation in the city, a twenty-two million dollar company, in answer to the question, "Do you endorse the Single Tax as it is operating in New Westminster?" said:

"Absolutely and unqualifiedly. It's the only fair system of taxation, and what's more, the reason we came to New Westminster was because of its untaxed port, its cheap land, and its exemption of improvements from taxation, all which means more profits for our shareholders and better wages for our workmen. "In addition," he said, "we know that here the wages of our employees would go farther because they could be home-owners—the land being cheap and the improvements untaxed."

So I saw that this Pacific coast city of western Canada was bearing out Henry George's tenets advanced fifty-one years ago that the concentration of taxation upon land values and the abolition of taxes upon labor products would make not only for a normal community development, but for a thoroughly diffused prosperity and a widely felt sense of economic security and economic freedom.

Inspiration to a Great Career

SAMUEL SEABURY, the law student, regarded Henry George as the greatest idealist of the age. He considered George's theory as did George, not a doctrine of Socialism, but rather one of individualism, individual rights in Democracy, rising above party in the interest of principle. He conceived it to mean that to all the people belong the land and the sovereignty of government—not to special groups, but to all the people; and that to labor belongs the product of labor's effort.

"He told me of his visits to Mr. George's home overlooking the harbor at Fort Hamilton, and of the long talks they had together," Mr. Stevenson said. "In the light of Mr. George's explanations, he saw clearly the social injustices which he determined to fight."

Henry George told Samuel Seabury that the need was for men willing to devote their lives and efforts to correcting social evils apparent everywhere a generation ago, even as now; and young Seabury became convinced that the public had not lost its capacity for indignation when confronted with injustice; that it had leaders capable of translating that injustice into language it could understand.—*N. Y. World-Telegram*.

TAXES on land values created by population would be the basis of a much juster and more equitable system of taxation than the present pyramided and overlapping systems of taxes we have.

Editorial, *Los Angeles Record*.

Canberra

A CITY OF LEASEHOLDS

ANSWERING a query of mine Mr. D. S. Burgess, for the Civic Administrator, wrote as follows: "The meaning of the word Canberra is obscure and its origin is uncertain. However, it is considered that it is a corruption of an aboriginal place name applied to that part of the Canberra City area which lies between Canberra Creek on the west and the Mononglo river on the south. The first white settlers of Canberra were stockmen of Lieutenant J. J. Moore, who arrived in the latter half of 1823.

In the letter dated December, 1826, Moore uses the name 'Canburry' as though it were a place name, and at that time there were only a few white men in the district. The first survey of what is now the Canberra City area was made by Surveyor Dixon in 1829, and it is considered that all the names used on his map are native names, with the exception of 'Ainsley'. In the early days the name was spelt with many variations of the middle and final vowels. The name Canberrá is first found in official documents about 1857. The official pronunciation was definitely settled on the 12th March, 1913, when Lady Denman (wife of the then Governor-General) was authorised to announce the name of the future capital city. Lady Denman, in a clear voice, accentuating the word on the first syllable and cutting the second syllable short as though it were 'bra', said: 'I name the capital of Australia 'Canberra'. "I am further indebted to Mr. Burgess for the pamphlets and papers containing a good deal of the information which I have summarised in the present article.

THREE IMPORTANT FEATURES

There are three features which every capital should possess, namely, a good water supply, a fine climate, and beautiful scenery. Canberra has all three. The Cotter river, with a catchment area of 170 square miles, provides abundant water supply for the city and is likely to meet all requirements for many years to come, while the Murrumbidgee flows through the territory receiving as tributaries a number of streams which are available if necessary as sources of water supply. Moreover, the Mononglo flows through the site in a westerly direction, and is the most picturesque feature of the scenery, while at Queanbeyan, a well known town about seven miles from the capital, it is joined by the river of that name. The average rainfall is about 25.5 inches, or about that of Melbourne and London.

You cannot get a perfect climate all the year round wherever you go, but Canberra seems to have one as near it as you will find anywhere. The scenery is extremely picturesque. The city lies in an amphitheatre of hills, two of which are over 6,000 feet high, while a third is over 5,000 feet and a fourth is over 4,500 feet high. This would sound very low in the United States, but in Australia the very highest mountain is only a little over 7,000 feet high.

On one of these mountains, Mt. Stromolo, 2,600 feet high, an astronomical observatory has been established, which carries out a lot of solar research, but the immediate object of which was to obtain an initial meridian to which all surveys of the surrounding lands could be referred.

THE CANBERRA PLAIN

In the centre of the Territory is the Canberra plain, on which were several sheep stations, mountain ridges here and there with little streams down their sides adding to the picturesqueness of the scene.

With all these natural, climatic, and scenic advantages it was decided to advertise for the best possible design for a capital city. Although the competition was intended to be world-wide it was practically limited to countries outside the Empire, the Royal Institute of British architects taking exception to some of the provisions, which the Home Minister refused to omit or amend. However, some very fine designs were received, the first prize being awarded to Mr. W. B. Griffin, a Chicago architect, who came to Australia, at the invitation of the Government, in 1913 and was associated with constructional work until 1920, when his term of engagement expired. His plan was finally approved by the Government, but the Great War intervened which delayed the carrying out of the work, and cost such a huge sum both in lives and money that the monumental scheme was temporarily abandoned in favor of provisional buildings, including a Parliament House, to meet present requirements.

PROVISIONAL BUILDINGS

At the end of 1920 construction was resumed and a provisional Parliament House, "a large white building of simple and dignified architecture," was commenced in January, 1924, and was finally opened on May 9, 1927, by H.R.H. the Duke of York, one of the outstanding events in our Australian history. According to the official account "it stands in the centre of the area set aside for Government purposes, which is being converted into a huge park, the various official buildings being disposed between gardens and avenues of trees." This is in accordance with the main idea which has been all along to make Canberra a garden city, with spacious avenues of trees, one of which, by the way, is several miles in length planted with trees donated by various bodies throughout Australia. Among the notable buildings is the temporary viceregal residence, Yarralumla, which was originally the homestead of the late Frederick Campbell, grazier, a provisional residence for the Prime Minister between Yarralumla and Parliament House, and (in the distant future) a monumental structure to house the War Memorial Museum, a provisional commemorative stone in the place of which was unveiled by the Governor General on Anzac Day in 1929. There are many other details of a like character which need not be recounted here, but a rather important one was the provision that all building plans should be

submitted to the central authority before erection so as to insure that they should be in accordance with a carefully thought-out scheme. Several changes have been made in the administrative authority since the territory was first handed over, but the present one, which took effect on May 1, 1930, consists of the Minister for Home Affairs and several of his Ministerial colleagues, supported by an Advisory Council.

A CITY OF LEASEHOLDS

What makes the capital of Australia so interesting to Single Taxers is that under the provisions of the Seat of Government Administration Act of 1910 no Crown lands in the territory may be sold or disposed of as a freehold except in pursuance of some contract entered into before the commencement of that Act. As already noted all Crown lands belonging to New South Wales were transferred to the Commonwealth free of payment, while nearly 210,000 acres of privately owned lands (209,500 to be precise) were acquired by the Commonwealth at a cost of about £750,000. There are still a few patches of alienated land or land in process of alienation not yet taken over, but the amount is small in comparison with that in the hands of the Commonwealth. Leases are granted for agricultural purposes for a period not exceeding 25 years, with special provisions for the extermination of weeds and noxious animals, about 40,000 acres being leased to returned soldiers for periods varying from 5 to 25 years. Longer leases are granted in the city area at an extreme period of 99 years, with rentals fixed 5% per annum on the unimproved value, the value to be ascertained by bids at auction or assessed by the government. These rentals are subject to reappraisal after a term of twenty years and thereafter every ten years. In order to prevent speculation the lessee is required to commence the erection of a building within two years, and to complete it within three years in accordance with plans previously submitted for approval, and no lease to be transferred until buildings have been erected as prescribed. Very wise regulations have been laid down by law for the construction of buildings in accordance with the general design of a garden city, with residential and commercial buildings separate from one another. The first sale of leases was held on December 12, 1924, when 147 sites were sold at prices representing values from £6 to £58 per foot for business sites, and from 10/ to £3 4s. for residential sites, the remaining leases have been sold since then at prices which the promises of the government to move the departments from Sydney to Canberra almost immediately raised to a speculation height. The promises were not fulfilled, the rents were found to be too high, and a constant endeavor has been made from that time to this to get them reduced.

"A NATIONAL FOCUS"

The depression also arising from the fall in the value of wool and wheat affected Canberra very seriously, and so

disappointed were some of the lessees, and many people were so moved by the expense that was being incurred in constructing and administering the capital, that proposals were even made that it should be abandoned altogether. An Australian weekly paper actually went so far as to publish a leading article with the heading—"A National Capital For Sale." But the proposal met with little real support, and was hotly combated by no less a personage than Dr. Radford, Anglican Bishop of Goulburn, who publicly declared that if Australia were to scrap Canberra she would lose not merely the millions that had been spent on it but the wealth that lived in it. Canberra, he said, represented a national policy and he believed that it represented a divine purpose. It was not merely a site but was to be a center, a focus, and a power house of all the best things in the life of Australia. It might not be big but it would always be great. He regarded it as the most fruitful investment that ever lay before a people, that it would lead to the future unity of the nation, and that through it Australia would develop a new patriotism: "All together for the Commonwealth."

HOW THE GOVERNMENT CAME TO THE RESCUE

The dissatisfaction which was very generally felt at Canberra was an economic one, due to causes which could hardly have been foreseen. The rents were fixed in boom times and had to be paid when the boom had passed. Had the land been sold by private individuals and bought as freehold, according to the prevailing custom almost everywhere else, the purchasers would have had no redress, but having been released from the Government, continual protests were sent to the Minister for Home Affairs (Mr. Blakeley, M. P.), who at last had the leases reappraised by an expert, and on his recommendation it was decided to reduce the values by 30% for rating purposes of city leases to operate retrospectively from January 1, 1930, while a reduction of 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ % would be made in rentals of a majority of rural leases, and house rentals would be correspondingly reduced. The Minister stated that, after giving careful consideration to the problem, the Government was of the opinion that the scale of reduction approved represented a solution of the matter which was fair both to the lessees and to the Administration. The effect on the annual revenue would be a reduction of £4,620. He further stated that the Canberra house rentals had been placed on a basis comparable to a normal Melbourne rental, allowing for certain advantages which existed in Canberra. The net reduction in revenue on account of housing would be £6,585. The Minister said that the Government's decision fixed a uniform basis for rental for all tenants and would take effect as from March 1, 1931.

MR. HUIE MAKES A SUGGESTION

Canberra was recently visited by Mr. A. G. Huie, the "indefatigable" secretary of the Henry George League in New South Wales, during one of his country tours, and

the account he gave of it in the *Standard* of February last is so interesting and suggestive that I will quote it nearly entire only premising that the dissatisfaction which existed among the lessees when he was there has been removed since then in the way I have indicated above. I would like to make one other observation before quoting Mr. Huie, and that is that the trouble at Canberra is precisely the same as exists in all the Single Tax Enclaves in the United States, as will be seen on reading the latter part of Mr. Huie's account. "Canberra people," he says "have serious grievances. They have practically no say in local government except in the payment of rates, which are heavy. Business people were induced to establish businesses and make homes in the city on the strength of Government promises which have not been carried out. The Government undertook to transfer the department in five years. That would have provided a population of from 12,000 to 15,000. This has been done to a limited extent only, thus stranding the business people. There is general dissatisfaction, and apparently no prospect of improvement in the near future. Mr. T. M. Shakespeare, M. L. C., introduced me to the audience at Kingsford in most appreciative terms. I made a suggestion which if carried out, would do much to make a success of Canberra. The land in Canberra belongs to the community. All holders are lessees who pay a ground rent. This has the manifest advantage of leaving so much of a man's capital in his hands to erect improvements. The Henry George theory is that the rent of the land belongs to people and should be used for public purposes. With such a policy taxation is unnecessary. The people of Canberra pay ground rent and local rates as well. In addition they have to pay taxes like other people in the Commonwealth, except that there is no stamp duty on cheques. I suggested that Canberra should be made a free city, that the authorities should be content with the ground rent, which is the natural revenue, instead of double banking the unfortunate people. All goods should come in free, if imported direct or a refund allowed if duty had been paid, say in Sydney. That there should be no income, probate or other taxes. In this way something practical would be done to make the capital attractive. Making Canberra a free city would put life into it. The situation is fine, the climate is good but the whole thing is artificial. Real cities grow naturally. Personally I was never in favor of a bush capital. Sydney is the natural capital of Australia, just as New York is of the United States. The unemployed camp behind the opposite Parliament House is a striking contrast to the fine official buildings, nice cottages and gardens. It is a collection of little huts, and a rambling sort of place used as a hall, with annexes for cooking purposes, etc. Canberra has its two extremes—the house of have and the house of want."

A SIGN TO ALL NATIONS

In a recent cablegram to the London Press Canberra

was called "Australia's White Elephant." Canberra at present is somewhat of a white elephant, but it will always be a sign to the nations that the land and its value belong by right to the people as a whole and not to a favored few. May the time soon come when other nations will heed the sign and adopt, it to the tremendous advantage of mankind.

PERCY R. MEGGY.

POSTSCRIPT—April 15. Just as I had finished and stamped the above article a telegram from Canberra was published which stated that "considerable extension of the functions of the Canberra Advisory Council has been promised by the Minister for Home Affairs." Hitherto the Advisory Council appears to have been so named on the *locus a non lucendo* principle because it was never called upon to advise. Notwithstanding the Minister's decision the Council urged that still further powers than those promised should be given to the Council, which in its present form, served merely to "ventilate hot air." "We would do better," said Mr. Shakespeare, "to let this autocracy stew in its own juice without trying to help it." The Council further recommended that rural leasees disagreeing with present or future rating assessments should have recourse to a Land Advisory Board to secure adjustment of their grievances."—P. R. M.

Lot Values and Community Service

AFTER all, taxes are only fees for service rendered by the community. And the same service is available to the owner of the empty lot as the one who built on his ground. When the former goes to sell, he will point out the fire protection available, the police, the water, the paving and all of the other community-made values as selling points for his lot.

But that lot-owner hasn't contributed his share to paying for that community service. And he should. If you buy a theatre seat, or a hotel room and fail to use it, you pay just the same. The case is similar.

The mere fact that any empty lot owner doesn't use the service the community provides him should not exempt him from his fair share of taxes.

Our present system does.

—Camden, N. J., *Evening Courier*.

THOUGHTFUL people, and those who desire to serve the common welfare, realize that there is nothing more crude and unsatisfactory than our present tax system.

It is, rather, not a system at all—anything but a system. It has come to be the practice of taxing anything that will yield a revenue.—*Elizabeth* (N. J.) *Daily Journal*.

If the ghost of Henry George had occupied a gallery seat in the House of Commons while England was listening to a high government official explain the curse of private ownership of land—how he would have enjoyed it!

Quincy, (Ill.) *Herald-Whig*.

Report of Lectures of James R. Brown

FROM MARCH 24 TO MAY 21

FOLLOWING is the report of fifty addresses by our lecturer, James R. Brown, in less than two months. This inspiring account of the work speaks for itself, and we can only hope that he will be long spared to continue this great work of education:

March 24—Port Washington, L. I.; Lions' Club; a group of business men, some 40 in number and my talk was entitled "Foolish Things That Wise Men Do." This talk has special reference to the inconsistencies and absurdities of our present method of raising public revenue.

March 25—Vineland, N. J.; Chamber of Commerce; subject, "Taxation: What It Is and How It Should Be Applied." A splendid group of 50 men. Attention to the lecture and interest in the subject could not have been excelled.

April 2—Roanoke, Va.; Lions' Club, 6:15 P. M.; 75 men sat down to dinner. It was a great pleasure to meet with them and to talk to them.

April 3—Lexington, Va.; Washington and Lee University; class, at 10:30 A. M., of 70 students; class at 11:30 A. M., of 60 students.

April 4—Lexington, Va.; Washington and Lee University; 9:30 A. M., class of about 60 students; 10:30 A. M., class of about 60 students; 11:30 A. M., class of about 60 students.

April 7—Staunton, Va.; Rotary Club; 80 in attendance.

April 9—College Park, Md.; University of Maryland; 10:20, social science group of about 200; 1:20, another social science group of about 200.

Annapolis, Md.; Rotary Club; attendance about 60.

April 10—Westminster, Md.; Western Maryland College; assembly of economic students at 3 P. M., 300 students in attendance.

Baltimore, Md.; St. Bartholomew's P. E. Brotherhood; attendance about 60.

April 11—Baltimore, Md.; 2 P. M., 20-minute talk on radio, Station WFBR.

April 12—Baltimore, Md.; A. M. E. Church; social service forum at 6:30 P. M., about 300 present.

April 13—Baltimore, Md.; Scimitar Club; 150 present: radio talk 20 minutes, Station WBAL; Johns Hopkins University, 50 present, at 6:30 P. M.; radio talk, Station WCBM.

April 14—Baltimore, Md.; Beausant Commandery, 12:30 noon; 25 present.

April 15—Annapolis, Md.; St. John's College; class in economics; 60 present.

Cantonsville, Md.; Rotary Club; 20 present; a new and small club, but important and interested.

Baltimore, Md.; Elks' Club; group of some 40, 8:30 P. M.

April 16—Petersburg, Va.; Virginia State College (colored); 10 A. M., group of 65 students; 11 A. M., group of 60 students; 1:30 P. M., class of about 40 students. This college is one of our yearly visiting places. They are tremendously interested and they are a nice, kindly, bright lot.

April 17—Williamsburg, Va.; College of William and Mary; class at 10 o'clock, about 40 present; class at 2 o'clock, about 20 present. I have been going here for some ten years.

April 18—Richmond, Va.; University of Richmond; class at 10 o'clock, about 80 present; class at 11 o'clock, about 70 present; class at 12 o'clock, about 50 present. I have also visited Richmond for the past ten years.

April 20—University of Virginia University, Va.; class at 9:30 A.