

opposed the proposal, not on account of hostility to the federal idea, but because of the exceedingly faulty character of the proposed constitution. Though the opposition polled over 82,000 votes in New South Wales, it was overpowered and the Federation established. One of the first fruits was the Barton tariff. Mr. Barton was an idol with the unthinking crowd some time ago. Now it is hard to find a man who admits having supported him or the Federal Bill, and those who did, regret it. You see we, in New South Wales, have enjoyed a greater measure of free trade than any other State in the world. Naturally, we are up in arms against the heavy protective tariff placed before the House of Representatives by the Barton Ministry. We got out a leaflet contrasting the Barton tariff with the single tax, and organized a public meeting to protest against it.

Our municipal elections, with the exception of those of the city of Sydney, are held early in February. As municipal rates are levied upon the rental value of land and improvements, instead of upon land values apart from improvements, we are taking advantage of the chance to bring the matter before the people. With that end in view we have issued a leaflet upon municipal reform. We posted half a dozen copies to every municipality, about 190, copies to 274 papers published in the State, and 300 copies to members, reputed single taxers, business people, and others. Of course a municipal council composed of single taxers has no power to legislate, but you can understand that a supporter of our principle is a better man to have in a council than an opponent. The point of least resistance here is to secure rates upon land values, so we keep that fact in mind.

In connection with this question of rating we organized a deputation to the Mayor of Sydney last week. We asked that the City Council should promote a short bill in the coming session of the State Parliament to alter the method of raising rates. Our speakers were Messrs. W. E. Johnson, J. R. Firth, and A. G. Huie. Ald. J. L. Mullins introduced us to the Mayor (Ald. Thomas Hughes). He received us cordially, and assured us that he was strongly in favor of imposing rates upon unimproved values. There was an amending Municipalities Bill before Parliament last session, but not dealt with. It provides for optional rating, that is the municipal electors can maintain the old system or establish our principle. This bill does not apply to the city. The Mayor, however, assured us that he had asked the Premier to make the rating provisions apply to the city also, by means of a short clause at the end. It is a bigger contract than we asked him to undertake, and less likely to meet with success, as the bill in question is both long and debatable in many ways. However, we must hope for the best. It is cheering to have gentlemen like Alderman

Hughes, the new Mayor (for he only took office on the 1st), so heartily with us. They are careful, however, to say that they are not single taxers. The words "single tax" constitute a bogey with many people in this country.

A little over a week ago we had what we call a "Georgian Evening." It is a kind of fixture in which we endeavor to blend the dry economic facts of the movement with song and conversational intercourse. So we had a short address upon municipal taxation, a short discussion on the subject, several songs, a general statement of the work being done by the League from the honorable secretary, a few remarks by the president, and an interval for conversation. This is a feature of the event. People come together on such an occasion who never meet at other times, and the opportunity to become better acquainted is much appreciated. The officers of the League have a busy time, however, as they must get as many outsiders to join as possible.

Generally, in a small way, we are trying to push the cause along. We have no paid officers. Whatever is done is done for the cause, often at the cost of considerable time and effort. We have no Tom L. Johnson in this country. Some of us cherish the hope that he may some day visit Australia. In the meantime it is a case of work. There is popular ignorance to overcome, there is unreasoning prejudice to fight, and the rank weeds growing from socialistic seeds have to be cut down.—A. G. HUIE, Hon. Sec. Sydney Single Tax League.

NEW ZEALAND.

I have much pleasure in sending you a gratifying item of information. The citizens of Wellington last month adopted the provisions of the Rating on Unimproved Values Act by a two to one majority, and from and after the end of March the local revenue of this city (the capital of the colony) will be raised from the unimproved value. It is now absolutely certain that before very long the system will be generally adopted throughout the country, and of course the working of the principle in connection with local taxation will help splendidly to educate the people for the greater change to come later on.

Strenuous efforts were made by the party of monopoly to defeat us by raising the cry that the proposal to levy rates on land values was a single tax idea, and long letters were published in the press to show that the system would injure "the poor man." The great majority, however, refused to take all the proffered sympathy for the poor man seriously, probably because it came from people never before suspected of philanthropic proclivities. Nor does the phrase "single tax" scare people as it once did, when the idea was less understood.

—P. J. O'REGAN, Wellington.