

FROM an item in the *Christian Science Monitor* we learn that at a session of the Special Assessment Committee of the Legislature, Sir William Hearst, Prime Minister of Ontario, intimated that partial exemption from taxation of those homes of low-salaried workers would probably be included in the government's housing scheme. The application of such a procedure would be general and not confined to houses built under the housing plan.

THE land tax would be our salvation: it would be the greatest, the most tranquil and the most beneficent of revolutions.—DR. RUY BARBOSA, eminent Brazilian Statesman.

THINK of it, in this aftermath of the holiday season just passed, that there are children who never heard of Santa Claus, or as one little tot told Mrs. Mary A. Sullivan, a welfare worker on the west side of Manhattan: "He don't know where I live."

A PAMPHLET published by John C. Gebhardt, a former secretary of the local Bureau of Charities of this city, states that from statistics obtained from 17,337 persons comprising 3,227 families, 56 per cent. have toilets without windows, and only 22 per cent. have bathrooms.

Buenos Aires

THE parties supporting the Single Tax in the recent municipal elections in Buenos Aires have triumphed by large majorities. No doubt with this signal endorsement of the policy of the mayor of Buenos Aires he will receive the prompt assent of the national government to his proposed new charter, embodying, as our readers know, the Single Tax programme for that city.

How Gerrit Johnson Views the California Situation

EDITOR SINGLE TAX REVIEW:

You ask me to say something about the California situation. Let me say in reply that I am leaving for Florida to-morrow and my time is limited, but if you will accept this hurriedly framed letter, I will explain the thing as I see it.

To begin with, I wish to state that on December 26th I mailed out 1044 letters with return post-cards enclosed. These letters and cards went to people whose addresses I had, who formerly supported the California movement. There has been up to date 311 post-cards returned in favor of a get-together movement, and 37 were for fighting it out. There were 23 cards returned unmarked, by people who offered other suggestions but did not mark card. I have received a great many letters. Those that favor the Californians fighting it out along the same old lines were most emphatic.

In order for us to see as clearly as possible, let us take our spectacles and clean them. Some of us may be looking through smeared glasses, and that often determines our attitude. Let us clean up. We may find there is something wrong with our own view-point. In writing this, may I ask all to forget any definite plan that they now hold regarding Single Tax, and look over the California situation as it was and is.

Some time ago there was an organization in California which I think was known as the Home Rule League. Its object, as I understand it, was for local option in taxation. If I remember rightly they had nearly 300,000 voters, more or less. If the Home Rulers had not been interrupted, they might now have gained their point, and then it would have been very simple to have taken one county, for instance Kern County, which is owned by a few men, and made that the entering wedge for Single Tax. We all know that if we get one county, the state will follow and then other states would have to take it up for self-protection. Things were running smoothly for the Home Rulers when along came Luke North with his Great Adventure and unfurled his banner for straight Single Tax. A great many of the Single-Taxers throughout the country flocked to him. Very few of the outside Single Taxers understood the situation in California, and I am frank to say I did not.

Somewhere in the mixup appeared the Equity Tax League, but I do not think they ever reached the ballot. I have no data as to names and figures. I am not interested in the past or dead as long there is hope and life ahead. May I tell you where I think the great mistake was made? Instead of the Home Rulers pulling off their coats and fighting to retain their position, most of them sat in their corner pulling faces and sticking out their tongues at Luke North and the Great Adventure, and then started the disruption.

Now here is the way it seems to me. I would suggest that the Home Rulers again get on the ballot with their proposition. Then let all those who are out of harmony with them (I mean ALL, no factions) get together and formulate a Single-Tax amendment. When election time comes most of the Home Rulers would vote for Home Rule in taxation and for the Single Tax amendment, and the Single Taxers would vote for their own amendment and the Home Rule in taxation. The Land Lords could not very well call the Home Rulers Single Taxers as they did before. They would have their hands full with the regulars.

I think the Single Taxers should retain Luke North as a writer but have someone else for a campaign manager. I hear someone say that under those conditions, he will not stay. Let me say to that,—you could not keep Luke North out of a good Single Tax fight with a club. The only trouble with him now is that he is in the wrong pew. How can a man give the best that is in him with a bunch of creditors hanging at his heels? He should be relieved of all financial responsibility, for we all know that in order to fight Land-Lordism, one needs a clear head. I honestly

believe that 90 per cent. of the California Single-Taxers would get together if given half a chance. I believe in fighting while the battle is on, but I reserve and demand the right to help fix up the firing line between battles.

Some years ago Henry George built a bridge which bridged the chasm between our present chaotic condition and paradise, but when we, his followers, come to its entrance, we seem to talk in foreign tongues and we do not understand each other. Our feet seem to get tangled so that we cannot cross. There is a tendency among us to carry a chip on our shoulder and scold. Some of us think that being stubborn means being radical. Let me say that getting the land value away from those who think they own it is going to be a battle with brains and needs unity of action.

Some of our biggest business men are Single Taxers; they believe in efficiency in full in their business, but when it comes to their hobby, their life's dream, they let it go haphazard. Let us take California as an example: We raised about \$28,000. for the last campaign, but it cost 33⅓% for every dollar collected. We were compelled to make this waste. It is waste, waste from start to finish. This does not apply to California alone, but we find the same thing all over the country. So long as we have to waste one-third of our energy, remain disorganized and call each other names rather than consider the obstacles that confront us, how can we expect success?

I sometimes wonder if the Single Taxers do not take themselves too seriously. The average Single Tax meeting is full of gloom. If someone laughs everybody is startled. We think we carry the whole world on our shoulders. I really think that Bengough with his chalk talks would make more Single Taxers than a dozen serious-minded lecturers. I have never met Bengough; I just say this because I have heard from so many people who have been converted by him. He gets results. In order to waken people from their slumbers, you must let them see things as they are.

Here are two articles that appeared in our Grand Rapids papers the same day: "New York, Jan'y 8th.—A fur coat worth \$75,000. is soon to be sent to Paris for Mrs. W. E. Corey, wife of the steel magnate. The coat is of Russian sable." The other article was that we, the citizens of Grand Rapids, took a mother of three American children and kept her in jail all night for taking twenty-five cents worth of coal to keep her children from freezing. I mention these items because to me our so-called civilization is so crude and ridiculous that if we ever get Single Taxers with any sense of humor, we would not have to lecture but laugh people into Single Tax.

Some day we will have a leader who is not a leader but a pusher. No well organized business has a leader but some where in some little room out of sight is the man who pushes. Some day we will have a pusher and then we will all centralize our forces on some one spot. We will plan a two-year campaign, hire some good publicity man (I mean a newspaper man who knows the ropes) at an expense of about \$3,000. per annum. He could get \$100,000. worth

of Single Tax publicity. We will have another person to take charge of a speaker's bureau at an expense of about \$5,000. We have in our own ranks talent galore that would be glad to give its services. The work done through this bureau cannot be estimated in dollars and cents. Every Single Taxer in that state will become enthused and fired with religious zeal, and we will tell all those who are looking for a perfect world beyond that if God is our Father, then the Earth is our Mother, and we cannot serve the one and neglect the other, and we will go into the highways and byways and preach for the abolition of poverty through Single Tax. About four months before election we will call in the psychologist; (I mean the man who opens up people's heads and sees what is going on inside) then we will call in the cartoonist and the advertising man and we will depict life in its nudity. We will let the one-half of the world know how the other half lives. We will hold our remedy high above our heads, so that they can see that our way is the only way for the abolition of poverty and the only way to secure justice.

Yours for a better world,

GERRIT J. JOHNSON.

BOOK NOTICES

A VALUABLE AND IMPORTANT WORK.*

We hope this book will be widely read. We welcome its appearance. Particularly should it be read by those who at this critical time are responsible for the reconstructive legislation which a disordered and disheartened world demands. Now, more than ever, must legislation look beyond palliative devices to economic laws. In so far as statesmen, whatever their sphere,—the nation, the state, the municipality,—act upon the old make-shift policy, to the neglect of the lasting needs of the community, they will do an evil service to their own day and future generations.

Mr. Brown addresses his book to all who "are concerned with the evils in our present economic system and who look forward to worthwhile changes during or after the war. World-wide democracy will be but half achieved if it be achieved in the political realm only, with no accompanying economic changes."

With Mr. Brown's conclusions Single Taxers have little reasons to quarrel. The debate will be rather with those whom the author describes as "economists whose social sympathies (of the influence of which they are not always conscious) or whose training by their former teachers, incapacitate them for seeing any distinction between land and capital." To these Mr Brown's work comes as a virile challenge, made in such terms that it must be taken up. The fundamental issues raised affect the economic policy of the country too profoundly to be ignored. They must be discussed by professional economists and settled once for all. It is unfair to American democracy, now deeply concerned about her future, that uncertainty as to these issues should continue a day longer than necessary. Class interests of a contrary nature must not be allowed to prejudice the final triumph of reason.

While the economists debate, we trust that the unprofessional student of the economic problems now facing our nation, will also consult this work of Prof. Brown. Economic problems, after all, are but the problems of business, industry, agriculture, the getting and distributing of wealth, the material and better things we all are rightly striving for. The style of the work is clear, easy, and its vocabulary untechnical; while on every page it is provocative of thought.

* *The Theory of Earned and Unearned Incomes*—by Harry Gunnison Brown, Professor of Economics in the University of Missouri—12 mo. 254 pp. Missouri Book Co., Columbia, Mo.