

the building market at a more rapid rate; it reduces the selling price of land, and thus provides the prospective house owner with the opportunity of obtaining more land to build his house on; it tends largely to the elimination of the land speculator, and, by encouraging the building of houses on land for which services are already provided, it improves the finances of the Municipality.

COLORADO

Mr. Barney Haughey, the Secretary of the Denver Lower Rent League, ran as candidate in the recent Denver Mayoral election. His platform was that of the League—lower rents by taking taxes off houses and other buildings, and by levying taxes on the value of land. This policy can be adopted in Denver, where there is home rule in taxation. Although Mr. Haughey was unsuccessful, he raised much public interest in the question. In the course of his campaign he got delivered from house to house 15,000 booklets, including THE PITTSBURGH PLAN, and the informing statement for Land Value Taxation called PEACE AND FREEDOM by Harry H. Willock.

AUSTRALIA

Canberra, the New Federal Capital, Established on the Principle of Communal Land Value for the Community

The terms on which building sites at Canberra, the new Federal Capital of Australia, are being made available by the Federal Government have just been published, and may be of some interest to your readers. When, some years ago, Canberra was definitely chosen as the site for the capital, an area of 900 square miles was granted by the Government of New South Wales to the Federal Government for the purpose. Part of the site, which was private property, was compulsorily purchased by the Government, so that all the land within the area became the property of the Federal Government, and it was definitely decided that none of this should ever be sold, but only leased.

Owing to the war and other causes there has been a good deal of delay in transferring the seat of Government from Melbourne to the new site, but preparations for doing this are now in full swing, and the transfer will probably take place within two years. The Government therefore has decided to make building sites available at once, and a sale of leases will be held in December next.

The terms are as follows:—

Each site will be offered at auction and assigned to the highest bidder, providing that the price offered reaches a reserve fixed for each lot. The highest bid made will be taken as representing the unimproved value of the lot, and a lease for 99 years will be granted to the successful bidder at an annual rental equal to 5 per cent. of this value. After a lapse of twenty years all the sites will be revalued, and the rent altered to correspond to the new value fixed. Thereafter the revaluations will take place every ten years.

The only serious fault that can be found with these conditions is the excessively long period between valuations, especially the first one of 20 years. But the principle is admirable from our point of view, insuring as it does that sooner or later all the increased value resulting from the growth of the city will come to the community, instead of going to enrich private landlords, as happens in all other cities. For Canberra will be unique in this respect, namely, that it will be the only city in the world (so far as I am aware) in which there is not a single foot of privately owned land. If it ever grows into a great city of a million or more, it should be a veritable gold mine to the people of

Australia. The withholding of land from use for speculative purposes, which is so prevalent in other cities, should be conspicuous by its absence at Canberra; with the terms detailed above in force it would be both useless and unprofitable to do so.

The development of Canberra should be carefully watched by Single-taxers throughout the world, for it seems likely to provide a valuable object-lesson for our use.

B. SCHLEICHER.

GERMANY

Our correspondent in Potsdam, Mr. Ernst Heinrich (Chairman of the University Students' Union for Land Reform), did excellent work during the recent German elections by translating and publishing in several important German daily newspapers the text of the leaflets that were widely distributed by the United Committee during the recent British General Election. In the TAGESCHAU (Berlin), of 9th November, the print appears of the leaflets, "A Word to Conservatives" and "How to Raise Wages"; and there follow the words "to be continued." VOLKSHEIL (Berlin), of 14th November, published the text of the leaflets "The Great Rate Scandal" and "What the Taxation of Land Values Would Do." In the POTSDAMMER VOLKSBLATT of 24th November, Mr. Heinrich has a paragraph translated from the leading article of November LAND & LIBERTY.

Dr. Otto Karutz, who was present at the International Conference at Oxford in 1923, sends the election number of the social democratic AGRAR KORRESPONDENZ, of Hanover, published 1st November. In this there is a special article on the Oxford Conference and an interesting description of its proceedings, with full translation of the "Manifesto to Rulers in all Lands."

Mr. Ernst Klindwort, Secretary of the Hamburg branch of the German Land Reform Union, sends a letter expressing the profound interest of himself and his colleagues in the work for Land Value Taxation in this country. Mr. Klindwort is the editor of "B.D.B." (Bund Deutscher Bodenreformer—Union of German Land Reformers), which the Hamburg branch is now publishing monthly as its own journal.

The weekly BODENREFORM, published in Berlin and edited by Mr. Adolf Damaschke, gives the information (21st December) that in the recent elections in Bremen, the President of the local branch of Land Reformers was elected. In Bremen a land valuation has been carried out showing separately the market value of land apart from improvements, and the basis is now at hand for the intended uniform tax on land values. It will be remembered that Dr. Pikler, of Budapest, paid a visit to Bremen some years back to consult with the Bremen authorities in this matter of land valuation. The services he performed at that time were warmly appreciated and now they are bearing fruit.

BODENREFORM (23rd November) publishes the *Questionnaire* addressed to candidates at the German elections by the Silesian branch of the Land Reform Union. The second question reads, "Are you prepared to support a tax reform that will abolish all taxes on productive agriculture and replace them by a tax on the value of land apart from improvements?"

Dr. Karl Schewe is the author of a large book just published on LAND REFORM AND LAND REFORM PARTY IN ENGLAND. The book sketches the attitude of the Liberal, Labour and Conservative Parties on the Taxation of Land Values and makes much of the "three camps of land reformers" in this country—the land nationalizers, the single taxers and the "confiscators," which is the author's generic term for those who stand for taking the whole economic rent of land at once.

In all this description there are marked signs of hurried writing, with insufficient data for the ambitious task the author has undertaken. The section on the International Conference at Oxford is better done and good publicity is given to the "Declaration of Principle and Policy" and to the "Manifesto to Rulers in all Lands" which the Conference adopted. The book provides a surprise in one respect. It deals fully (and in 18 pages item by item) with the Report of the Special Advisory Committee on Land Policy appointed by the Labour Party in 1923. That Committee heard evidence in the House of Commons from Mr. Madsen, Mr. Hyder, Mr. Outhwaite, Mr. Wedgwood and Mr. Robert Murray. It is common knowledge that a provisional report was prepared but the report has been withheld from publication, having been only provisionally circulated among members of the Committee. Yet a copy has found its way over to Germany and has fallen into the hands of Dr. Schewe, "a document of 37 typewritten sheets," to be given the imprimatur of something official, although without any statement to explain who sent it.

ARGENTINA

The Annual General Meeting of the Liga Argentina para el Impuesto Unico (Argentine Single Tax League) took place in Buenos Aires on 22nd June last. The office-bearers elected included: Dr. Andres Maspero Castro, as President; Messrs. D. A. Furnkorn and A. Schiapparello, as Vice-Presidents; and Mr. F. Armando Carta, as General Secretary, assisted by Messrs. T. Galli and B. Machello.

The monthly journal of the League, the REVISTA DEL IMPUESTO ÚNICO is a well-edited and informing paper. In the July issue (28 pages) there is a special article on the life and work of Joseph Fels, and another congratulating LAND & LIBERTY on its thirtieth anniversary.

BELGIUM

We have received from the Land Reform League in Brussels a copy of their second number of their monthly bulletin, LA TERRE (Land). It contains, among several interesting articles on the present system of land tenure, a French translation of an extract from Henry George's PROGRESS AND POVERTY, Book 7, Chap. 1, "The Injustice of Private Property in Land," together with a short note on Henry George's life and work.

In the opening article of this issue of LA TERRE, entitled "The Land Question," the writer brings to readers' attention the great importance, in the light of present day economic strife, of discussing the land question which essentially is the root question of all our social problems.

In a very interesting article by "Reymas," "What is a Tax?" it is shown that present day taxes are levied in such a way as to deprive men of any beneficial results of their own labours, and can only add to the cost of all commodities. The writer goes on to argue that the only tax which can be levied and not be added on to the price of our food, clothes, etc., is a tax on the value of land, pointing out at the same time that this tax will break down land monopoly and bring more land into use.

"Rent" is the title of an excellent little treatise by M. Blanche, which constitutes a first lesson on political economy, the three factors in the production of wealth and definition of terms being those laid down by Henry George in Book 1, Chap. 2, of PROGRESS AND POVERTY.

LA TERRE contends that the value of land belongs to the community, and that the present holders must be

called upon to pay to the Public Treasury this value without compensation.

We wish LA TERRE every success in its field of adventure. In bringing to the people of Belgium and France its message of economic freedom, the equal right of all to use of the land, and to an equal participation of its communal value, it is rendering a service which is invaluable to progressive thought.

The library of LA TERRE would be glad to receive publications (in any language) bearing upon the land question in general. The publication offices are at 55, Rue de Pavie, Brussels, Belgium.—M. C.

JAPAN

We learn from a Japan correspondent in the MANCHESTER GUARDIAN, 23rd December, that the Government in its reconstruction schemes affecting Tokio and Yokohama are at last working out a considered plan for new and widened roads, with some regard to public rights in the land. The correspondent writes:—

The Government puts it to the landholders that the cost of laying some hundreds of miles of road is so enormous that it cannot pay for the land as well; landholders, it says, must make some sacrifice, which it has fixed at 10 per cent. of their holdings, where land is needed for improvements, and in each ward (or other unit of reconstruction area) the landholders who are not deprived of 10 per cent. of their land will be responsible for compensating those who are deprived of more than 10 per cent., to the extent of their loss beyond that figure. A Government Commission will decide on the value of the land, and in cases where a plot becomes useless to the owner he will be bought right out or provided with a plot in another suitable place nine-tenths the size of his old plot. In any case where, in a whole reconstruction area unit, more than 10 per cent. of the building land is taken, the Government will pay the district in a lump sum for the excess. To this plan the citizens are exhorted to give their aid as a matter of mutual service and sacrifice.

What a confiscation howl we should experience here if the British Government called upon the landholders to make any similar sacrifice in the making of our much-needed new roads. The very mention of a Land Valuation Department "to decide on the value of the land" affected would send some newspapers and their property-owning readers into a perfect frenzy. The Dukes would assuredly be out in another 1909 "star turn."

GREECE

In its issue of 21st September, BODENREFORM (Berlin) reports a resolution carried at the Third All Greek Peasants' Conference, held recently in Athens. The Conference demanded expropriation of the large estates with compensation based on the average market price during the five years before the war, and refusal of property rights to any one who did not take personal part in industry. The questions thus raised were the subject of a special article in the FREE TRIBUNE (Eletheron Vima) of 1st July, contributed by Mr. Pavlos Gianella, who showed that the just demands of the landless and land-poor people could best be achieved by the Taxation of Land Values and the corresponding removal of the senseless taxes on output and consumption and of the tariffs on imports.

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