

HIGHLAND LEAGUE: I. Mackenzie, Hon. Secretary, The Arcade, Inverness.

The meeting at Ardersier on 27th June was very successful considering the number of men and women attending, and the enthusiasm displayed after Messrs. Polson, Macdonald, and the Secretary had addressed the meeting at some length. The following resolution was put, carried unanimously, and copies sent to the Prime Minister and Sir Murdoch Macdonald, M.P. :—

"This meeting strongly condemns the expenditure of £45,000,000 of the taxpayers' money during the next 15 years for the purpose of exporting people to the Dominions, seeing that in the Highlands alone there are three and a half million acres of land reserved for game and would, therefore, urge upon the Government that the monopoly of natural resources should forthwith be abolished."

A well-attended public meeting under the auspices of the Petty Branch of Farm Servants' and Ploughmen's Union was held in the New Hall, Dalross, on 6th July. Mr. Alexander Macdonald, chairman, briefly introduced Mr. A. Polson, President of Highland League Land Values, who gave an instructive address on the Land Question.

Councillor Jas. Macdonald, who was loudly applauded, said the men who had fought in the war were no longer of service to the country, and the Government had, therefore, made a scheme providing that £45,000,000 of the taxpayers' money shall be spent in, transporting some of the people to the wilds of Australia and other Colonies, which, no doubt, would be profitable to rail and shipping companies, but meant banishment to men accustomed to easier modes of wealth production in their native land. "Where is the vision of the politicians, seeing there are millions of idle acres at our own doors awaiting the cultivator—mineral lands containing coal, iron, slate, and stone, sites for factories, workshops, not to speak of houses for the people? The remedy is simple," he added, "and could at once be applied if the politicians were only courageous enough to face the vested interests and take the community-created rental value of land for public services (local and national), either gradually or wholly as the people desire."

A local committee was formed at the conclusion of the meeting, after which the usual votes of thanks were awarded to the chairman and speakers.

HULL

Major Vasey, O.B.E., the prospective Independent Liberal candidate for East Hull, has lately addressed a series of successful meetings in the constituency. Major Vasey puts the Taxation of Land Values in the forefront of his programme. Discussing the land question at his meeting at Windmill Corner on 7th July, he dealt principally with the enclosures of the commons. He said :—

"There was a time in England when there was not so wide a difference between the rich and the poor, between the peasant and the lord of the manor. It was at a time when each village or township was surrounded by common lands, common fields, and common waste, on which the villager grew his food, grazed his cattle, and collected his fuel, and while that state of things lasted there was no great wealth on the one hand, nor grinding poverty on the other, just above the verge of actual starvation."

"In time the lords of the manors cast envious eyes on the land of the peasant, and the enclosures of the commons followed. Thousands of Acts of Parliament were passed—thousands—each robbing some village community of their land, and with the loss of land there was loss of livelihood, and—greatest loss of all—loss of independence. Altogether six million acres, or 9,375 miles, nearly a quarter of the whole area of England, was enclosed. In the East Riding of Yorkshire alone, 40 per cent. of the area was enclosed."

"The following were some local cases: Sutton, 140 acres; Ferriby and Kirk Ella, 3,350 acres; Market Weighton, 6,700 acres; N. and S. Cave, 3,900 acres; Marfleet, 480 acres; Sudcoates (Drypool), a large area the acreage of which is not stated, but which was given as 94 nobles of land. These enclosures were made by Act of Parliament in the interests of one class, and at a time when that class and that class alone had Parliamentary power. It was a sinister reflection, and one that should never be lost sight of, that the greatest enclosures were made during the Napoleonic wars. While the so-called lower orders were fighting their country's battles, the so-called upper classes were enclosing the land."

"The land was enclosed by Act of Parliament, and what an Act of Parliament has done an Act of Parliament can undo. Whenever the democracy of England shall set out to right the wrongs of enclosure by the taxation of land values they will not study the interests of any one class but the well-being of all: they will not take from any man that which is his, but they will, without fear or favour, restore for the use of the community that which the community alone can create, i.e., land values."

The address was fully reported in the Hull newspapers.

We advocate a policy of levying rates or taxes upon the value of land, apart from the buildings on it. In this way the burden of rates would be more fairly distributed and enterprise in building would not be penalized.—*From LIBERALISM AND YOUTH, by Mr. Ramsay Muir in a leaflet issued by the South-West Bethnal Green Liberal Association.*

DENMARK

DET FRIE BLAD, of 29th June, has an article by Mr. Abel Brink reporting the debate in the Lower House on 21st June, on the Budget proposal to levy a national tax (equivalent to one-third of a penny in the £) on the selling value of land, apart from improvements. The proposal was adopted by a four-to-one majority and was sent to the Upper House.

This is a great victory for the Henry George Movement in Denmark. Although the tax is small in amount, it is levied without exemption or gradation. It is a straightforward step that makes a beginning on right lines, and is of special importance, as it is associated with a universal valuation which must be periodically revised.

Mr. Brink says that the 21st June, 1922, marks a milestone for the agitation in Denmark. We add that it may be hailed as a red-letter day in the history not only of the Danish movement but also of the international movement for the taxation of land values. Our co-workers in Denmark are to be congratulated on their success.

HUNGARY

The Budapest correspondent of the MANCHESTER GUARDIAN (5th July) reports that the Hungarian Finance Minister, M. Kallay, in presenting the new Budget, proposes to reduce expenditure by wholesale dismissal of officials and the total decontrol of food. Among new measures for raising revenue, the taxation of land values is the most important. The correspondent says this taxation is based on novel lines, the taxes being so regulated as to rise or fall with the price of wheat.

In Hungary, as our readers know, the taxation of land values has already made some practical progress. Budapest has a land value rate of $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. (approximately 1½d. in the £) of selling value. Reports on the working of this local tax were given in our issue of December, 1920, and April, 1922.

RUSSIA

We have received copies of TERISTO, a pre-war Russian Esperanto journal revived under a new name and published at p.k. 663 Stanislav, Szabuniewicz, Moscow. No. 1 contains some matter very interesting to Single Taxers and has the following opening statement, for a translation of which we are indebted to Mr. A. H. Weller :—

Everything living comes from the land and, fulfilling its destiny, returns to the land. If land is made the exclusive property of some men, all other men, deprived of land, depend upon the landowners and practically become their slaves.

Every social arrangement is based on the normal according to which land-rights are distributed amongst the inhabitants. The essence of all social reform is land reform. From that fundamental principle it follows: Each man (human being) must enjoy equal rights to the land; each man must enjoy equal legal rights. Healthy, just and harmonious life is possible only in the close contact of man with the land—with Nature. To live justly and in liberty man must discard superfluities.

The mission of TERISTO is to unite all who are animated by similar ideals, to investigate the realized manifestations of life, to register them, and distribute the information. Then according to the acquired experiences, to work out and complete our conception of life and seek the way to true progress.

There is a long extract from Tolstoy's A GREAT INIQUITY, and a review of a book by the late Dr. Rathenau, German Minister for Foreign Affairs, with a criticism of one of his proposals, heavy taxation on luxuries. TERISTO remarks: "One should not fight against the rich but against poverty and unemployment. Laws must be enacted to prevent some people enjoying privileges which rob the people. . . . There is only one tax which the Government can rightly impose: the single tax on the value of land."

From a report in BODEN REFORM, the paper quotes in full the resolution carried at the Glasgow Conference in 1921. With TERISTO two pamphlets were issued. No. 1 advocates the Single Tax; No. 2 discusses Garden Cities.

CANADA

Mr. W. A. Douglass, veteran leader in the Single Tax Movement in Canada, was entertained to dinner on 21st June at Hunt's, in Toronto, on the occasion of his 80th birthday. Under the genial chairmanship of Mr. Joseph Watson a notable array of speakers was presented to the meeting, many of whom came long distances to bear the greetings of various organizations to the honoured guest of the evening. Their addresses were extensively reported in the Toronto papers. The GLOBE in a leading article paid tribute to Mr. Douglass as "The grand old man of the Single Tax Movement," and said: "His life has been a success in the deepest sense because he has been true to his convictions, and never faltered or weakened in expressing them and working for the cause which he has at heart. He has been the typical idealist, keeping his own course 'in the scorn of consequence.' But while he has been steadfast there has been nothing hard or narrow in his scheme of life. He is inspired by intense zeal for justice and love of humanity. Political economy has been for him, not the 'dismal science,' but the science of human service and right human relations. In his long life in Toronto he has won the confidence, affection and respect of a host of friends who delight to do him honour."