

Signs of Progress in the Recent Canadian Liberal Victory

FOR five years, down to October, 1935, Canada was governed on strongly protectionist lines by the Conservative party, led by the Right Honorable R. B. Bennett. The depression and the general confusion arising therefrom gave strength to the main opposition party, the Liberal, led by the Right Honorable W. L. Mackenzie King. It had the effect also of fostering new parties, each with its special proposals of reform.

In the general election in the autumn of 1935, the Liberals kept close to their traditional line of lower tariff and reciprocal trade pacts with other countries, especially the United States. There existed already such a pact with Great Britain, arranged by the Bennett government in 1932, but on lines objected to by the Liberals, who proposed to remodel it to facilitate trade. In the campaign every party that put candidates in the field declared a belief in the existence of plenty, which plenty was to be extended as a result of their several policies.

The outcome of the election was a surprise. Not only was the government defeated, but the minor parties elected far fewer of their candidates than had been expected, and the Liberals were given a large majority over all the others combined.

On election night, when the returns made it clear that his party was to be in office, Prime Minister-elect Mackenzie King issued a statement to the Press, which was telegraphed to all newspapers, setting forth what he understood to be the will of the people as expressed by the vote. Here are some of its expressions: "Today's victory is a victory for democracy." "It is a direct response to the Liberal protest against all forms of dictatorship in Canada, whether they incline towards Fascism, Socialism or Sovietism." "The people generally share the view, kept to the front by the Liberal party, that trade is the basis of industrial and commercial development; and that a Canadian government should do all in its power to negotiate trade agreements with all countries willing to trade with Canada on a reciprocal basis." "The people of Canada are opposed to planning for scarcity by the restriction of production, of trade, and of employment." "The election is an unmistakable verdict in favor of the liberation of internal and external trade; of a reciprocal agreement with the United States; . . . it is a demand for policies which will make for economic freedom, national expansion and international good will." "It is a verdict in favor of the more equal distribution of wealth."

On this and much more in the same vein, Mackenzie King proceeded to declare his party's policy. Liberalism in Canada, he said, had had its beginning a century ago in the struggle for political freedom. He went on:

"In the new era which dawns today the struggle for the rights of the people will, in the realm of economic liberty and security, be carried on as never before. Poverty and adversity . . . are the enemies which Liberalism will seek to banish from our land. . . . We take up at once, as our supreme task, the endeavor to end poverty in the midst of plenty."

The Liberal government has proceeded on the lines of the above forecasts. One of its very first acts was to negotiate a reciprocity treaty with the United States; one of its most recent to complete a new agreement with Great Britain with a view to more expanded trade. In between, freer trade arrangements have been made with a number of other countries, including Japan, Russia and Brazil.

A great deficit and an old and complex system of protection have prevented reduction of taxes, except in the way of trimming, but rising revenues and marked improvement in business are clearing the way for reductions later on. Unemployment is still a serious problem, especially as added to, and aggravated by severe shortage of crops in the drought area of the West, but activity in mining and other basic industries provide many jobs, and the strong efforts of the government to systematize relief are beginning to show good results. It is manifest in many ways that the Liberals really are "opposed to planning for scarcity" and that they trust to more plentiful production both by industry and by trade to "end poverty in the midst of plenty."—A. C. CAMPBELL.

The Robert Schalkenbach Foundation Report

WORK in the Foundation's office has been both varied and interesting in past weeks.

The bookdealer trade has been especially encouraging, and while many of the die-hards still refuse to stock our titles and cling to the old habit of buying one book at a time to fill specific orders, we have had sufficient success with the more progressive dealers to justify our continued efforts.

The New York University Book Store at 90 Trinity Place, New York, have put in a full line of Henry George's books, and have given over the center of their window to a special display of "Progress and Poverty," "Social Problems," "Protection or Free Trade" and "The Land Question." A colored picture of Henry George occupies the center of this attractive display.

Our correspondence with one bookdealer in Los Angeles, California, brought this interesting comment: "I heard Henry George speak in Cincinnati many years ago, and I remember hearing him in Zenio, Ohio. . . . I have handled your books for many years."

Sixty-five copies of "Progress and Poverty" were

shipped to the University of Princeton late in January, and fourteen went to Temple University more recently.

A full set of Henry George books has been purchased for presentation to the library of a new high school opening in North Arlington, New Jersey. The Foundation supplied a picture of Henry George, hoping that it might be possible to display it in the new library. Our congratulations to the far-seeing gentleman who made this presentation. This is excellent missionary work.

As a result of the efforts of our correspondent in British Honduras, we received the names of a number of persons prominent in government circles in the colony, and the way was paved for a favorable reception of our literature and books. "Progress and Poverty" and "Protection or Free Trade" were sent to the Governor of the colony as the gift of the Foundation, and donations of books went also to the libraries of the Catholic Mission and the Church of England Mission. Assortments of appropriate literature and letters inviting comment were sent to others in British Honduras whose names were given us.

From our correspondent in Mexico comes the following interesting information on the land problem down there:

"The people of Mexico have been oppressed so long by the ruling classes that they are struggling feverishly to throw off the intolerable burdens that have been pressing them into the mire of poverty and misery. They seek escape. Any sort of wild theory that the most blatant demagogue propounds for his personal advancement receives eager acceptance. They mill around like helpless swine in a trough of mingled pain and illiteracy. The light of Henry George has not burst upon them and they listen to siren calls of this ambitious leader and that greedy politician. Sometimes editorial writers make mention of "unearned increment" in a hopeless, muddled sort of way. They, too, are groping in the darkness.

"However, the people feel that something is wrong . . . they have reached the elementary state of thought . . . they are seizing the great estates and breaking them into pieces. These pieces are then distributed among the people by the local politicians with all the favoritism and corruption that such a process is certain to engender. Thus is created a large army of selfish peasant proprietors while the crux of the problem for the people as a whole is left unsolved. In fact, the ultimate solution is made more difficult by interesting a larger class in the maintenance of the present system of private ownership of land.

"While Mexico is a fertile field for advanced ideas, here, as elsewhere, the man who first propounds the ideas of Henry George must be prepared to suffer persecution and martyrdom. The people whom he most wants to help, being infected with the vices of communism, socialism, syndicalism and other grosser "isms", will be the first to turn and rend him . . .

"The eternal verity expounded by Henry George will live and eventually prevail. Of that there is not the slightest doubt. But social movements, like all movements, flow in rhythmic waves. At the present moment the truth lies resting near the bottom of an ascending line. It is on the upbeat again, however, and I think the time is not far distant when it shall again resound as it did when our great leader gave voice to the beautiful harmonies of economic law which he saw clearly and dis-

tinctly. In his words of wisdom lies the key that will unlock the gates of iniquity and allow the people to go forth and enjoy their birthright—the right to the free and untrammelled use of what the Creator intended for their common use—the land."

V. G. PETERSON, Acting Secretary

Washington Letter

THE members of the Woman's Single Tax Club welcomed their president, Mrs. Helene H. McAvoy, who had that day returned from Canada.

During the business session, Miss Alice I. Siddall read the revised copy of her proposed Single Tax amendment to the Constitution, which, after some discussion, Honorable Charles R. Eckert of Pennsylvania, expressed his willingness to introduce in Congress.

A tin literature holder, with the inscription "Please Read Us," painted on it, and filled with Single Tax leaflets, clippings, etc., was presented to the club by the vice-president, with the suggestion that it be placed where it would do the most good, and that the members bring to the meetings any Single Tax literature which they have no better use for, and keep the holder filled. Mr. Walter I. Swanton, whose office is around the corner from the Y. M. C. A., offered to see if he could place it in the reading room of that organization.

The speaker of the evening, Congressman Charles R. Eckert, gave a talk on "Single Tax and Practical Politics" in which, after congratulating the club on having a headquarters for their meetings, expressed the hope of some day seeing a national headquarters at the Nation's Capital, the logical and strategic place for it. He would be glad, he said, to introduce the Constitutional amendment bill but explaining something of the difficulties in the way of getting legislation through that "close corporation known as Congress," and expressed doubt that our amendment would receive the support from the leaders in Congress or in the States, to which its merit entitled it, because they were not yet educated up to it. There would, however, be the advantage of getting the bill published at public expense and getting as many copies of it as we want for distribution. Then it also becomes a subject of discussion in the House and gets into circulation throughout the United States through publication in the Congressional Record. Mr. Eckert spoke as follows:

"President Roosevelt, in his speech on "Philosophy of Government" delivered in 1932, declared that "government includes the art of formulating a policy and using the technique of politics to enact as much of that policy as will receive public support—persuading, leading, educating always, for the greatest duty of the statesman is to educate." It does no good for Single Taxers to get together and explain the Single Tax to one another, the task before them is to educate those outside and make America a nation in which, in the words of Woodrow Wilson, "the strong could not force the weak to the wall nor prevent them from entering the race."