

den City association. The idea is to construct a model town in fresh air and amid the healthful influences of country life. A site is to be obtained which possesses simply agricultural value, all future "unearned increment" being secured to the inhabitants of the town by an appropriate trust deed. The highest possible standard of commercial, social and sanitary efficiency is to be realized. It is calculated that for a sum considerably less than the London county council is spending in providing sites for "model dwellings" for persons displaced by the Strand improvements a site of 6,000 acres could be purchased, 1,000 of which would form the space for a town of 32,000 inhabitants, including open spaces, municipal buildings, library, schools, churches, baths, etc., as well as dwelling houses, warehouses and factories. The homes so provided would be no mere fractions of a huge skyscraping city barrack, but real homes, with gardens, "and bright vistas of stream and meadow and wood around." The general object is to attract population from overcrowded and unhealthy centers to new scenes which combine at once the healthy delights of country life and the social attractions of the town. Such an experiment would not only be beneficent in itself, but would form an interesting and instructive object lesson which could scarcely fail to give an impulse to social development on the best lines. The association appeals for funds to meet the expenses of offices, secretaries and the preliminary work of organization. Full information can be obtained from Mr. E. Howard, 11 New court, Carey street, W. C.—London Daily News of March 1.

#### NEW ZEALAND.

For The Public.

New Zealand is but a small colony in the Pacific ocean, and till lately little known to the outside world. In political economy it is, however, an object lesson to some of the larger communities.

The study of economic questions so ably expounded by the late Henry George (sneeringly called the Prophet of San Francisco by the great landlord Duke of Argyle) has made a deep impression on the minds of New Zealanders, and they have put the theory into practice, though only in a small way. The present government is strongly imbued with socialism, or at any rate is in sympathy with it. The labor laws which they have inaugurated are somewhat of a drastic

character, and are reckoned in advance of the times, but are certainly favorable to the workers. Under the present laws there cannot be either strikes or lockouts, such as have had such disastrous consequences, both in England and America.

The labor party here seems to occupy about the same position in the industrial world as the capitalist employers in America, that is, they are the power behind the throne. So things may be said to be reversed here from what they are in the states.

If the tax on unimproved land value were increased up to the fullest extent, without exemptions, and the unimproved land rating act were compulsory throughout the colony, instead of being optional with local county councils—and as a consequence customs duties abolished proportionally. New Zealand would indeed be the workman's paradise it is now reckoned to be by some.

At the last general elections Auckland (probably the most advanced city in New Zealand) elected the president of the Single Tax league, George Fowlds, Esq., as one of the three representatives for the city. This was a great victory for the unimproved land value tax, and will undoubtedly help the cause. There are other members of the house of representatives who are almost as advanced as Mr. Fowlds.

The premier, the Rt. Hon. R. Seddon, is one of the most advanced social reformers, and quite prepared to initiate much more up-to-date legislation as the people are prepared for it. One of the most far-reaching and philanthropic measures he has succeeded in passing is the old age pension act, which gives to every adult over 65 years of age a pension of £18, or over \$70 a year, that is if he has resided in the colony 25 years—subject, however, to his income from any source being less than £1 a week. This measure met with great opposition from nearly all land owners. It turns out, however, to be one of the most popular pieces of legislation ever enacted.

To show that such measures have not injured or hindered the prosperity of the colony, the premier has just announced a surplus balance of over £600,000 for the last year.

J. P. PHONERLE.

Auckland, N. Z., May 14, 1900.

He that commits a fault abroad is a trespasser at home, and he that injures a neighbor hurts himself.—Marcus Aurelius.

#### AN ENGLISH ANALYSIS OF THE MUNICIPAL PROBLEM.

Services which may be performed by local authorities for the inhabitants of the locality fall into two classes—onerous and remunerative. Making and repairing streets, sewers and the like belong to the first class; and very few people suggest that these duties ought to be handed over to voluntary effort. It is in regard to remunerative services that the contest between the relative advantages of municipal and individual action rages. Even here the popular mind has grasped some sort of a rough distinction. It would be thought very absurd and impracticable for a municipality to turn grocer; but water and gas are considered (outside London) as very proper articles to be produced and distributed by the representatives of the ratepayers. Profit, then, is no criterion; the fact that water and gas companies may pay very good dividends does not make the municipalisation of gas and water wrong or undesirable. The difference between a water undertaking and an ordinary industry is the difference between a natural monopoly and competitive enterprise. We say a natural monopoly advisedly; for there are plenty of monopolies artificially created in this country, and still more in the United States, which do not come into the category of gas, water or tramways. Combinations of dyers, wool combers or spinners of cotton thread are only partial and only temporary. They are always exposed to foreign competition and to the possibility of domestic competition. In these cases competition, or, at least, the possibility of competition, protects the consumer in some degree; and, moreover, if the consumer's interests were seriously threatened, it would be a matter for parliament and not for a local council. Railways are in many cases a complete monopoly. Consequently, railways have been nationalized in some countries and in others submitted to central administrative control.

It would seem, then, that those who see in municipal problems a conflict between individualism and socialism, between the laissez-faire and the collectivist theories of industry are mistaken. The founders of the Manchester school would have welcomed the interference of the municipal council in all cases where the ratepayers are exploited by a company owning a natural local monopoly. It is a cardinal principle of free trade that artificial monopolies and protectionist barriers should be broken down. But the