

FAIRHOPE.

The normal and proper condition of a Single Tax town—with everybody busy—prevails at Fairhope. The "Labor Problem" here is rapidly becoming reversed. Instead of men hunting jobs, it is difficult to get men to do work desired. While we would by no means claim all the credit for this for our application of the Single Tax principle over the small territory we are able to control, there is no doubt that it is having a very great influence in that direction. The ease with which men can secure access to land and become their own employers, vastly increases their independence and the application of rental values to public works, thus increasing opportunities, is another important and related factor.

An extraordinarily dry May and June were rather discouraging to our farmers, but recent rains have revived their courage as well as their crops.

We are having a fine fruit season. Peaches, grapes and figs are in the height of their season, also the luscious water-melons—of which those of this section are famous for excellence. Several schooners have loaded melons on our shore front in the last few weeks for Mobile and New Orleans, besides many shipments made on the steamer.

May was the best season in the history of the steamer *Fairhope*, the gross receipts reaching nearly \$1,000. The receipts of the wharf, a "public service" owned and administered by the Association, were \$186.68.

We had a very pleasant visit last week from Mr. J. B. Howarth, of "What's the Use," East Aurora, N. Y. In spite of all he had heard about Fairhope, he was totally unprepared to see such a fine little city as we have. He declared that in his twenty-two years experience as a commercial traveler he had not seen in any state of the Union a town of its size, presenting the manifest evidence of public and private enterprise and prosperity that were apparent at Fairhope. This is something remarked on by all visitors, though not all see as clearly as Mr. Howarth did, that the elimination of land speculation with its attendants of tumbledown shacks, and weed-grown vacant lots, and the relieving of improvements from taxation, are the prime causes.

R. F. Powell, of the Philadelphia Vacant Lots Cultivation Association, is endeavoring to organize a "Fairhope Improvement Association," to build cottages for rent and sale on Fairhope land. He is meeting with much encouragement, and hopes to be down in November, possibly earlier, to take active direction of the work.

Our town is now full of summer people, mostly Mobile residents. It is certain that fifteen or twenty more cottages could be rented within a week, to Mobilians, if they were available. This is one of the great ad-

vantages of our location, that it is suited for both a summer and a winter resort—and not alone a summer resort for Southern people, but for Northern people as well. There are a number of such here now, who declare it is much more comfortable than in Iowa or Illinois.

The *Courier* office is now engaged in getting out a handsome illustrated booklet on Fairhope, something which has been very much needed. It will be out soon, and will be sold at ten cents a copy.

Professor Bellangee is out on a second tour in the interest of the plan to enlarge the land area of our Association, which is the one thing for which we ask and feel that we have a right to ask aid of Single Taxers. We bespeak for Prof. Bellangee the hearty cooperation of Single Taxers, everywhere he goes. His story of the results of the application of Single Tax principles at Fairhope is as effective a Single Tax speech and as interesting, as can be made.

E. B. GASTON.

News—Foreign.

TORONTO.

With the passing of Winter goes our busy season. But though the busy season may be gone we are not idle. We believe in the maxim of the poet, "In times of peace prepare for war," and just now we are "preparing" for one of the heaviest summer campaigns yet organized. Our battle cry is still the same—the exemption of all dwellings from taxation to the extent of \$700 of their assessed value.

The City Council is about to pass a by-law establishing direct legislation in this city, and we are preparing a petition by which we will compel them to ask the legislature to grant the city power to apply this exemption.

Our method of circulating the petition is to place copies of it in the hands of all our members, and to secure admission for our speakers to all clubs, trades unions and meetings possible.

Our lecture on the French Revolution by Prof. Lybarger, while a disappointment in some respects, has nevertheless proved a success. The professor addressed as many as 1,200 people when here, most of them being an entirely new audience for our speakers. We were fortunate enough to secure an opportunity for him to address the Canadian Club, one of the largest organizations in the city, which holds a dinner once a week between one and two, when an address is delivered by some prominent man. Three hundred men, mostly of the plutocratic element, listened to Prof. Lybarger.

The Young Democrats Club, an organization headed by the young men of the movement, has just closed its second season.

This year has been one of great growth and the club now numbers a goodly number of earnest young men, more or less Single Taxers, and all workers. These are to be the leaders of the movement in the next few years, and a bright future can be predicted.

Every association should have such an auxiliary debating club for its young men, where they can bring their friends, and thus introduce them gradually to the work of the movement, using it as a preparatory school.

WALTER H. ROEBUCK, Secretary.

MONTREAL.

The movement of the Montreal Railway Co. for an extension of their franchise was effectively blocked for the present by the defeat in the council of the proposal by a vote of 26 to 6. This does not show the true gravity of the crisis as it is well known that a number of the aldermen shifted over when it was felt that the motion was doomed. In the eighteen years the franchise has yet to run many more such attempts are sure to be made, necessitating constant watchfulness on the part of those interested in the public welfare.

A suggestion from an official source to support the public schools by a taxation of land values seems to have been defeated by the usual policy of inaction. It cannot be more than temporary, however, as the terribly over-crowded state of the schools is certain to keep public attention directed towards the increasing need for educational funds.

Perhaps the most promising event of the year was the election by an overwhelming majority of a pronounced anti-franchise mayor, and the defeat of several aldermen known to be favorable to the Railway Co. The French Canadian section of the city is bitterly hostile to the Railway Co., and is showing an increasing interest in civic problems. The mayor elect has stood for years in the council for honest administration and his election by an absolute majority in a three-cornered contest is good evidence of this interest. As a consequence the railway franchise extension is again set back, and public ownership of the gas plant, which had been slowly growing into public attention, came suddenly to the fore. The present gas franchise has yet about two years to run, but the agreement contains a year notification clause, if expropriation is contemplated. Otherwise the agreement extends itself automatically for five years. The subject came up immediately in the council and public ownership was resolved on. A deputation of aldermen headed by the mayor went to the Quebec Government to obtain the necessary legal power. Through what looks almost like intentional bad management on the part of the city representatives, the clause allowing public ownership was struck from the city's bill.

The usual hostility of the country members to the city's wishes as well as the invisible efforts of the gas company also contributed to this defeat. At present it looks as if the five years extension is almost assured. The hopeful sign is the strong public sentiment in favor of city ownership to break the present monopoly of the means of lighting.

Another proposition which has received scant attention is an alderman's proposal to levy a tax per foot frontage for snow removal, a very large item yearly in the city's expenditure. The Single Tax Association took steps to support the proposal, and it will probably come up again next year.

Since the people of Montreal are at present at the mercy of the monopolists of the means of lighting, public as well as private, the association memorialized the federal government at Ottawa to abolish the duty on refined coal oil. A fifty per cent. reduction was granted and crude oil was put on the free list. It since appeared from a statement of the gas company that they also were active towards these ends, crude oil being a factor in the manufacture of gas. The reduction in the tariff will thus save them \$50,000 per annum.

At the annual meeting of the Single Tax Association a decided change in the personnel of the executive was decided on, and the following officers elected: President, Henry Timmis; First Vice-President, John Anderson; Second Vice-President, Joseph Fortier; Secretary, J. R. Roebuck, 178 Mansfield Ave.; Treasurer, R. B. Capon; Financial Secretary, D. C. Barker. A board of management was appointed, composed of the following; Messrs. B. Marouse, Chas. Lingham, T. C. Allum, John Barker and E. J. Griffiths.

J. R. ROEBUCK, Secretary.

NEW ZEALAND.—AUCKLAND.

The session of the New Zealand Parliament which has just closed was remarkable for its heated debates on the land question. A few members who call themselves the representatives of the farmers were persistent in their efforts to induce the Government to cause all crown leaseholds to be merged into the freehold tenure. This proposal, which was not carried, met with strenuous opposition from the reform section of the House. Some interesting debates took place in which the whole land question was opened up, nor was the matter allowed to rest when the session closed. A number of members organized meetings in various parts of the colony to protest against the further sale of crown lands and urge the necessity of increasing the present tax on land values. The first of these meetings was held in the city of Christchurch, on January 28th, before an audience estimated at over 2,000. Some five or six members of Parliament spoke. Mr. T. E. Taylor, in a spirited speech, said: "That the land question was above all others an imperial